

THE
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WHAT ARE THE GROUNDS OF ACCEPTANCE WITH GOD?

IT is of vast importance to the right conduct of life and to the security of our immortal interests, that we form just conceptions of the nature of Religion, and particularly of the grounds of acceptance with God. This is not to be numbered among the speculative themes, on which men may safely differ. It enters essentially into practice, and an error respecting it may be fatal. Yet, important as it is, perhaps there is none, on which there is a greater tendency to self-deceit, or a more active propensity to substitute something of our own for the unerring word of God. Notwithstanding the explicit declarations of scripture, which they admit indeed to be the truth, it is extremely difficult to persuade men, that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" that sin in all its nature and influence is odious in the sight of Heaven, and unrepented and unforsaken will inevitably be punished. No less difficult is it to impress men with the conviction of the indispensable and indissoluble connexion of religion with morality; that it is not a profession, not a transport, or a prayer, but the prevailing habit of the soul, proved by the fruits of virtue; by a pure, humble, and useful life: that piety especially does not consist in crying "Lord, save us, or we perish"—going to God, in the time of danger, when we have no other refuge; but repairing to him daily, in our safety and amidst our blessings, so that when danger presses, or sorrow, or death invades, devotion may not be a novelty,

we may not be found strangers at the mercy-seat, or compelled to cry out in ignorance and alarm, "Lord, teach us to pray."

Yet, various and unequivocal as are the instructions of the gospel, accordant as they are with the best conceptions we can form of the character of God, and the nature of men and virtue, it is astonishing to what extent this subject has been misunderstood and perverted in some systems of theology, and in the crude notions of multitudes, who still profess to follow Jesus Christ for their guide. What now, let us inquire, are his words? "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees," that is, unless it be something better than the profession, or the outward garb of holiness, "ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." What is the character, to which this blessedness is promised? "*Whoso doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven.*" "For the hour cometh, when all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth; they *that have done good* to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." His apostles uniformly speak the same language. "In every nation," saith Peter, "he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, shall be accepted of him." "To them, who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality, eternal life; but to them, who do not obey the truth but obey unrighteousness, tribulation and wrath, indignation and anguish, upon every soul of man, that doeth evil."

Indeed we must extract a large portion of the old and new Testaments, should we adduce only the plainest passages, which teach, that the way of acceptance with God is an holy life; that our future condition will depend upon present character; in other words, that "God will render to every man according to his deeds;" that though after we have done all, we are but unprofitable servants, and our goodness cannot extend to him, yet through his mercy in Jesus Christ it shall be accepted; that, on the other hand, though our sins cannot hurt the impassible God, they are displeasing in his sight, and that the equity of his government, the sanctity of his laws, and especially the moral good of his universe, demand, that they should receive a punishment proportioned to their extent; from which nothing in the whole course of divine providence or grace, in the compassion of God or the mediation of Christ, shall save the sinner, but only deep and humble penitence, approving its sincerity to the searcher of hearts, in the future obedience of the life.

This treatment of mankind according to their characters, according to their improvement or abuse of gifts and opportuni-

ties, their obedience or violation of God's commands, unequivocally declared, seems perfectly compatible with the noblest views we can form of the divine character; with the discipline we should expect, as most suited to rational and accountable creatures, and as exerting by its sanctions, its promises and threatenings, the most salutary influence on the peace and virtue of the world. Yet reasonable as it is, and plainly as it is taught, there are not a few, who cherish other grounds of hope, and it is to be feared, encourage themselves "in sin, that grace may abound."

There are particularly two sentiments, contradictory indeed to each other, but equally opposed to the truth, and leading, it is believed, to the same pernicious and corrupting results: the one, grounded on mistaken views of the mercy of God in his Son, supposes that all men shall be saved without distinction of good or bad, and with no other punishment than they may suffer in the present life, having their sins freely pardoned through the mediation of Christ; the other, drawn from equally false conceptions of the divine grace in converting the most abandoned sinner, builds the hope of salvation on something wholly independent of ourselves, and granted only to God's elect, according to his uncontrollable and inexplicable sovereignty.

The danger of sentiments like these is great, both to the individuals who adopt them, and to the community in which they prevail. It is great, as might be expected, in exact proportion to their departure from the unerring standard of inspired truth. Whenever a man has learnt to persuade himself that he can attain eternal happiness on any other conditions than obedience, he has lost the strongest security to his virtue, and society their strongest security that he will not be a pestilent member. If he can believe, that through the mercy of God and the all-embracing mediation of Christ, his soul shall be safe, whatever sins he may have committed in the body; or that, though God hateth sin, he selects the most abandoned sinners as the monuments of his free regenerating grace; on either of these grounds, his moral purity is in danger. For even should he admit, and with such believers it is sometimes triumphantly declared, as granting to them a more exclusive privilege,—that "strait is the gate and few there be that are saved," yet such is the presumption, and did it not seem a solecism in terms, such is the spiritual pride, of many self-deceived offenders, that they would fain persuade themselves, that they are of the chosen few; and that having no righteousness of their own, (which indeed may be

literally true and which they seem to value as an essential qualification) they will be clothed upon with the righteousness of Christ, and share the triumphs of the great salvation.

But we have not so learned Christ ; nor dare we rest our hopes on a baseless fabric. Such sentiments we regard as among the perversions of pure Christianity, most injurious in all their influence upon public and private morals ; and, we believe that whoever with such a faith shall violate God's law, will find to his anguish the falseness of his dependance, and in the solemn revelations of eternity will mourn, when it is too late, his departure from the way, the truth, and the life.

With regard to the first error, to which we have reference, it might be sufficient to urge, that the doctrine of future punishments as well as of rewards, of misery to the wicked as well as of happiness to the good, is forced upon the mind by every just view of the character and government of God, and by the survey of his unequal providence in the world, as seen in the frequent suffering of the good and in the apparent prosperity of the wicked. Much indeed may be urged, and justly, of the present sufferings of sin ; of the pangs of conscience, of the degradation and contempt, and other temporal disadvantages, to which it subjects men. Much may be urged, and justly, of the influence of conscious guilt in spoiling our best enjoyments ; spreading a dark cloud over every object, and taking from the sinner the comfort of even his innocent pleasures. Who will question, that in a most important sense, " there is no peace to the wicked "—no pleasure, in what fraud, or violence, or hypocrisy may procure ? But this is far from reaching the extent of their demerits. Upbraiding conscience is silenced by the clamour of passion, and hardened by the habit of transgression. The vast proportion of habitual sinners do not reflect, and therefore do not suffer the pangs of compunction. It belongs to their unhappy character, that they proceed from worse to worse, and soon learn to give themselves up to commit all iniquity with greediness. The sentiment therefore, that their sin is adequately punished by its own miserable reflections, in the present world, supposes a tenderness of conscience, an acuteness of moral sensibility, which the sinner does not possess ; a kind of punishment, of which habitual transgression has rendered him utter unsusceptible.

It may still further be urged against this sentiment, that it involves a very partial and inadequate view of the moral government of God ; that it makes a very slight distinction between the virtuous and the wicked, while it leaves vice without its most solemn and effectual restraint. For what forbids our ap-

plying to a punishment that is to terminate with the present life, the same reflections, which we employ for our consolations under the afflictions of the world? Poignant as they are, they cannot be of great importance in themselves, for they cannot continue long. We are accustomed to say to suffering virtue; "only be patient for a season, and death shall bring thee thy crown." And with the same justice might the sinner sustain himself under the pressure of guilt; "my punishment will end with life, and after death I shall find the salvation of my soul, and share in the inheritance of heaven, as though I had never sinned."

We will not attempt to urge all the arguments which may be offered against this opinion,—we only add further, that it is absolutely opposed to the whole tenour of scripture. There is not a single text that can fairly be adduced in its support, and pious industry would find it difficult to collect the passages, which without a figure, by various and energetic expressions, peremptorily and unequivocally assert the contrary. The glorious doctrine of the immortality of the soul is scarcely more frequently or more clearly exhibited. And we cannot but wonder and lament that any should so far pervert the oracles of God, as to persuade men to believe, that there is no punishment hereafter; an error, we repeat, most dangerous to the interests of society; for it breaks down the barriers of conscience, and removes those salutary restraints, without which, neither virtue, nor reputation, nor property are secure.

Again; in opposition to another fallacious hope, which is sometimes unguardedly inculcated and most dangerously cherished; let not the impenitent expect his present peace or future acceptance from any sudden preternatural influences of divine grace, imparted in the hour of peril, on the bed of sickness, and least of all in the immediate prospect of death. Let him be assured, as from the truth of God, that all the reliance he can build on such a foundation must prove delusive: for it is a presumptuous hope of what neither the wisdom nor the compassion of God will grant. Not that we limit the grace of God. But what is meant by the grace of God? Is it not the influence of his pure spirit upon the mind and heart to enlighten darkness, to strengthen weakness, and to help us to will and to do of his good pleasure? But it is granted, not arbitrarily and in uncertain measures, but by established laws, in accordance with natural light, in co-operation with known principles of our nature, maintained as well as appointed by the Lord of nature. It is granted, not in the way of sin, or even of mere expectation, but in the course of active duty; not to supersede our efforts and leave us to indolence, but in answer to prayer and in dili-

gent use of opportunity, to aid and quicken us. Because we find in the history of the apostles, that St. Paul was suddenly converted on his way to Damascus, and from a persecutor became the most zealous and successful minister of Christ, some are presumptuous enough to imagine, that the like signal interposition may be wrought for them. They do not reflect, that here was a miraculous appearance of Jesus Christ himself to one, chosen from the whole world to be, not an humble private christian, but the apostle of the Gentiles, to proclaim the message of salvation to the whole earth; the instrument under God by his preaching and his writings, of leading many, even unborn and unnumbered generations, to glory. They do not reflect, that the power, which converted him, was the same miraculous agency, that restored sight to the blind, health to the sick, and life to the dead; that it was exerted at a period, when miracles were in the due order and course of divine providence for the first establishment of the Christian faith; when such interpositions were needed, and therefore bestowed. But now, when miracles have ceased, and the great objects for which they were designed are accomplished, in the wide extension and the glorious triumphs of christian faith, can any indulge the hope, that the usual course of God's moral government is to be interrupted for their sakes? After in his bounteous mercy he has set before us all the means and encouragements, that can possibly be addressed to rational and accountable creatures, can they expect that any agency will be exerted for them, contrary to that wise and salutary course, of all others best adapted to its end, "ordered in all things and sure?" It is sufficient, that the grace of God is promised freely to all who ask it and will improve it, in measures and methods suited to our moral exigencies, and to our character as free and accountable agents. Holiness or virtue from its very nature cannot be forced upon us. It must be our voluntary choice, for otherwise there is no virtue. It must be the growth of time, and can be proved to be real only by trial; by the resistance of evil, and by the abundant fruits of righteousness. The providence of God, it is never to be forgotten, is continually acting for us in the ordinary events of life, setting before us striking events, exciting us to reflection alike by blessings and by chastisement, teaching us solemnly our frailty, our exposure to death, and the vanity of the fairest earthly prospects. Thus it is designed to admonish, to quicken, and to purify. To this great end it is acting every day for even the most abandoned sinner. To him, no less than to the obedient and faithful, the word of God addresses its rebukes, its threat-

enings, its encouragements. And the same God, the author of his moral nature, has given him eyes to see, and ears to hear, and understanding to discern, and is ever ready by the influences of his pure spirit to assist his humblest effort. But if the sinner long persist in hardening himself against those calls of Providence, those admonitions of the divine word, those suggestions of divine grace,—in the just judgments of heaven, that eye shall be darkened, that he cannot see, that ear shall be closed that he cannot hear; and the soul that has so long been proof against the offers of mercy, the tenderest solicitations of paternal love, shall suffer without remedy. Indeed such is the confirmed hardness of some, who have been favoured with the choicest means of religion, that they may be considered as having sealed their doom before they leave the world: their term of probation has closed before their term of life; and God, who has witnessed all their hardness and insensibility amidst his reproofs, has given them over to a reprobate mind. Tremendous is the condition of him, of whom Jehovah has said, as of his impenitent and unfaithful people, “Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone.”

It would however be a gross abuse of this general sentiment, to make the application of it of ourselves, to any particular individuals. The general rule is established in the word of God for our warning and exhortation; but judgment belongs to God. He alone knows our situation and character, the good that is mingled with our evil, and the evil, that is mingled with our good. As long as life remains, duty must be performed, whether it be of penitence or praise. The most profligate and abandoned sinner is exhorted to repent, and the command loses nothing of its obligation, because he is on the verge of eternity. Life is the appointed day of grace, and its last moments must not be wasted in despair, because its best strength and opportunities have been abused in sin. Whether a death bed penitence can in any case be accepted, is not for man to declare, for it is not among the promises of God. But of this we may be assured, that to live in sin, with the hope that it will hereafter be forgiven, is presuming against the whole tenour of God's moral government and the most explicit declarations of his word. It is to suppose what is utterly groundless, because it contradicts every just idea of the nature of sin or holiness, that the character can be changed at once; that a few days or hours of weakness and fear, amidst the pains of sickness and in the near prospect of eternity, when religion is our only refuge, and we are penitent by necessity, may blot out the remembrance of a corrupt life: it is to suppose that

God, who sees the end from the beginning, and surveys at one glance the whole of our past probation, as well as the fleeting present, attaches more importance to the day of our death, and to the feeble services we can render amidst languishing nature and appalling fears, than to the whole tenour of our lives, when we had the will and opportunities of free agents. In fine, it is to cherish a most unchristian, and therefore unreasonable hope, which offends against the dictates alike of natural and of revealed truth, and which will be put to shame amidst the solemnities of a final retribution.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

ON ROMANS ix. 3.

"For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."

This clause has been considered of peculiar difficulty; but this difficulty, I am convinced, would never have appeared, had the import of the original been exactly followed. It arises from two circumstances; one, that the verb *ευχόμενος*, translated in the common version, *I could wish*, is rendered in a wrong mode and tense; and the other, that the words in this clause are, as I conceive, improperly connected together, the first half of it being, as I think, a parenthesis, and the last half being connected in sense, not with this parenthesis, but with the words which precede it in verse 2. Thus; "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." This, which seems to me the true interpretation, has been pointed out by Gilbert Wakefield, a name dear to every advocate of civil and religious freedom.

But before proceeding further in illustrating this exposition, I will quote what is said respecting the passage by Doctor Doddridge.

Dr. Doddridge, interwoven with his paraphrase, gives a translation in the words which he has printed in italics, as follows;

For methinks, if I may be allowed to express myself so, I could even wish that as Christ subjected himself to the curse, that he might deliver us from it, so I myself likewise, were made an anathema, after the example of Christ; like him exposed to all the execrations of an enraged people, and even to the infamous and accursed death of crucifixion itself, for the sake of my brethren and kinsmen, according to the flesh;

that they might thereby be delivered from the guilt they have brought upon their own heads, and become entitled to the forfeited and rejected blessings of the Messiah's kingdom: so cordial and disinterested a regard have I for my dear nation."

In a note the doctor observes, that he adopted this manner of translating the passage from Dr. Waterland. "Next to this," he continues, "I should incline to the interpretation given by Dr. Clarke, who supposes the apostle means, that he could be content that Christ should give him up to such calamities as those, to which the *Jewish people* were doomed for rejecting him; so that if they could all be centered in one person, he could be willing they should unite in him, could he thereby be a means of saving his countrymen. Compare Deut. vii. 26; Josh. vi. 17. and vii. 12.—Grotius understood it of a separation from the *Church of Christ*, (which is sometimes called by the name of Christ, 1 Cor. xii. 12; Gal. iii. 27.) or of *excommunication*. Elsner shows very well, as many other commentators have done, how very absurd it would be to suppose he meant, that he could be content to be delivered over to everlasting misery for the good of others."

There are some classes of christians who will not thank the Doctor for his last observation, regarding as they do this kind of disinterested benevolence, as the true test of the christian character.

To return then to the explanation which I have before suggested, I conceive that the first part of the passage under consideration, contains an accidental thought, a parenthesis, such as is not unfrequent in the writings of the glowing and full-minded apostle. The verb translated *could wish*, may mean and does here, I conceive, mean *boasted, gloried in, or professed*. The passage in connexion with what precedes may be thus rendered.

I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart, (for I myself once gloried in being separate from Christ) for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

The following version of the whole period exhibits the combined efforts of several distinguished men:

"I say the truth in Christ, I speak not falsely, my conscience bearing me joint witness in the holy spirit, that I have great sorrow and continued grief in my heart, (for I also was once an alien from Christ*) for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh; who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the

* Bandinel translates "I boasted that I was an alien."

law, and the service of the temple and the promises ; whose are the fathers, and of whom, by natural descent, Christ came. God, who is over all, be blessed forever."

Wakefield justifies this version of the parenthesis by the use of a similar phrase in Homer. "It gives an obvious and a beautiful sense, similar to a sentiment advanced by the apostle upon another occasion, Gal. iv. 12. "Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am ; for I also *was* as ye *are*."

On the subject of this text I will quote a passage from a sermon of the Rev. Peter Eaton of Boxford—distinguished for good sense and chaste composition—as in many respects the opinions which he expresses coincide with my own.

"The doctrine of submission has been carried to a singular length by modern theorists. They have considered it as requiring in us a willingness to be forever separated from God and all good, if it may be for his glory. This is made the test of the Christian temper. If you are willing to be miserable forever, that God may be glorified, you have christian submission ; if you have not been formed to this temper of mind, you are yet a stranger to the power of religion. This sentiment is maintained, as a requisite for future happiness.

"In support of the sentiment two passages of scripture, more especially, have been adduced. One is from the writings of Moses, when he was interceding for his countrymen the Hebrews. *Yet now if thou wilt, forgive their sin, and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book, which thou hast written.* By this book is understood by some the book of eternal life. Does not the passage admit an easy and natural solution, if we consider him as speaking of his natural life ? This then is the plain import of his language. 'If so heinous their offence, that thou must, O God, withdraw thyself from them, I wish no longer to be their guide ! If so aggravated their crime, as to preclude their pardon, permit me not to live to witness their overthrow and utter destruction ; or if their pardon can be purchased by my life, I freely resign it up.' We consider this a noble expression of patriotism, which does great honour to the Hebrew law-giver.

"The other passage is from the writings of St. Paul. *I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.* Various opinions have been expressed on this text, and recourse had to different methods to solve the difficulty. A certain ingenious writer has remarked, that the expression, 'I wish myself accursed, or separated from Christ,' is an incidental thought, naturally suggested by his subject, and ought to be included in a parenthesis. Then the connected reading will be, 'I have great heavi-

ness and continual sorrow of heart for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.' When he speaks of wishing himself separated from Christ, he alludes to his former state of unbelief, when he was an opposer of Christ; when separated, and he gloried in that separation from him. A willingness to be forever separated from God is rather an evidence of a positively wicked, than of a good temper of mind. For what is the employment of the miserable beings, who are separated from God? Is it not profaning the name of that Being, who has doomed them to sorrow? If then willing to dwell with the forlorn inhabitants of darkness, this implies a willingness to unite in their employ, which is a certain proof of a wicked temper of heart. Besides the very supposition is inconsistent. Was not this the expressive language of David, *Whom have I in heaven, but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.* Is it possible with this temper of mind, he should be willing to be forever separated from this most beloved and estimable object? The supposition is absurd. It is certainly more reasonable to believe a wicked man should be willing to be separated from God, than the good man, who loves him with all his heart." A.

REASONING OF BISHOP BEVERIDGE.

"I believe, that as there is one God, so this one God is three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

"This I confess, is a *mystery* which I cannot possibly conceive, yet it is a *truth* which I can easily believe; yea, therefore it is so true that I can easily believe it, because it is so high that I cannot possibly conceive it; for it is impossible any thing should be true of the infinite Creator which can be fully expressed to the capacities of a finite creature: and, for this reason, I ever did and ever shall look upon those 'apprehensions of God to be the truest, whereby we apprehend him to be the most incomprehensible; and that to be the most true of God, which seems most impossible unto us.' "

Private Thoughts, Part I. p. 29.

The author of this remarkable passage was a dignitary of the episcopal church of England, renowned for his talents and his piety. We are not disposed to question either his piety or his talents, but the principles on which he justified his belief in the mysterious doctrine are, we think, incorrect and of dangerous tendency. To evince the fallacy of those principles, let them be applied to other mysterious propositions. Suppose

another bishop should publish the following creed : I believe, that in the Lord's supper the bread is changed into the real body of Christ. I believe that God is both divisible and indivisible ; that he is the greatest and the least of all intelligencies ; that he fills heaven and earth and yet exists no where ; that he sees and knows all things, and yet is destitute of knowledge ; that he is absolutely good, and yet destitute of all goodness.

But expecting that others would object to these doctrines as self-contradictory, this bishop justifies his belief in each of them in the following manner :

"This I confess, is a *mystery* which I cannot possibly *conceive*, yet it is a *truth* which I can easily *believe* ; yea, *therefore* it is so *true* that I can easily *believe* it, because it is so *high* that I cannot possibly *conceive* it ; for it is impossible any thing should be true of the infinite *Creator* which can be fully expressed to the capacities of a finite creature : and for this reason, I ever did and ever shall look upon those apprehensions of God to be the *truest*, whereby we apprehend him to be the most *incomprehensible* ; and that to be the *most true* of God, which seems most impossible unto us."

Now admitting this bishop to be both pious and learned, should we not be compelled to believe that his understanding had been greatly bewildered by the prejudices of education ? But to such prejudices all men are liable. How wide then the range for the exercise of candour. By the following extract from the same Bishop Beveridge we shall, however, see the consequences of admitting a mysterious doctrine, as an essential article of faith.

"Hence also it was, that all persons to be baptized were always required, either with their own mouths, if adult, or if infants, by their sureties, to make a public confession of their faith in *Three Persons*, into whose names they were to be baptized : For this indeed was always looked upon as the sum and substance of the christian religion, to believe in God the Father, in God the Son, and in God the Holy Ghost ; and they who believed in these *Three Persons* were still looked upon as christians, and they who did not were esteemed infidels or heretics." Part II. p. 43.

This paragraph opens the way for many remarks ; we shall however, confine ourselves to a few.

1st. What the bishop says was "always required" of persons "to be baptized," is we think without any foundation in all that is recorded of the practice of the Apostles.

2nd. We do not admit that a belief in the doctrine in question "was *always* looked upon as the *sum and substance* of

the christian religion." For there was a time when this doctrine was not known in the christian church ; and there have doubtless been many pious christians, that regarded the doctrine as an important article of faith, who were still far from supposing that a belief in it was " the sum and substance of the christian religion." Yet we cannot deny that many professed christians have given too much evidence that, in their view, a belief in this article is the one thing needful, and of far greater importance than conformity of temper to the moral precepts and the example of the Messiah. Hence we may account for much of the unchristian treatment which those have received who have dissented from the doctrine, and yet have made it their care to be followers of Christ and to obey his commands.

3d. If a belief in the mysterious doctrine is " the sum and substance of the christian religion" will it not follow, that Christ's sermon on the mount had no respect to the " sum and substance" of christianity ? and that he was under a mistake in the conclusion of his discourse, in likening him, who " heareth and doeth" the sayings, or commands which he had delivered, to the " man who built his house upon a rock ?" For he had not, that we can discern, the least reference to the doctrine of three persons in one God in any part of his sermon.

4th. According to the bishop's account, " the sum and substance of the christian religion" consists in the belief of a doctrine, the meaning of which he could not " possibly conceive." Can it then be wonderful that in past ages the hateful passions of persecution and war, have been deemed consistent with christianity ? How different would have been the effects, had conformity of heart and practice to the temper exemplified by the Saviour been duly regarded as " the sum and substance of the christian religion !"

If any of our readers should say that the articles of faith which we have supposed to be asserted by another bishop, are more inconceivable or more repugnant to reason, than the one which occasioned these remarks, they are desired to remember, that, according to bishop Beveridge, this very circumstance is to be regarded as evidence of the *truth* of those articles. For on his hypothesis, we are to regard " that as most *true* of God, which seems most impossible unto us." Therefore, if it ' seems more impossible unto us ' ' that God is the greatest and the least of all intelligences, ' than that he is three distinct persons, then the former of these must be regarded as " most *true* of God," or the reasoning of the bishop is fallacious and dangerous.

We have seen what opinions some christians have maintained. May God in his mercy hasten the time, when it shall be

more generally understood that a belief in doctrines, the meaning of which we "cannot possibly conceive" is not "the sum and substance of the Christian religion"

A GLANCE AT THE HISTORY OF OPINIONS CONCERNING
THE CREATION AND FALL OF MAN.

No. I.

IN tracing back the history of religious doctrines, we have a much higher object in view than the mere indulgence of curiosity. We should indeed be compensated for the research, if it afforded nothing else than the satisfaction of knowing how the wise and great have speculated before us; but this gratification is of small value, when compared with the real utility which may be derived from such investigations. They illustrate the necessity of using our own minds in understanding the scriptures, by shewing the various extravagancies, into which men have deviated. They guide us to the manner, in which we should reason, by enlarging our field of view, and lifting us out of many prejudices that had confined our judgment. They will often assist our interpretation of the sacred writings by placing them in new lights, explaining their obscurities, and dispelling the phantasies that we had mistaken for a part of the word of truth. They will show us the gradual, and often not very honourable progress of opinions, that have grown celebrated in the world; and teach us, of how few and slight materials formidable systems of faith have been erected, by human ingenuity and polemick zeal.

Influenced by these considerations, we propose, in this and a succeeding essay, to take a rapid and general survey of the opinions that have been entertained among christians concerning the Mosaic account of the creation and fall of man. That account has been made of great importance in dogmatical divinity, and lies at the very foundation of most of the prevailing confessions of faith. This circumstance will give interest to our inquiries; and as we shall offer no opinions of our own, but merely relate what others have thought, no class of believers can with justice complain of us. Our design is not necessarily concerned with the theories of different theologians, on the *origin* of the narratives, which are contained in the three first chapters of Genesis. It will not seem irrelevant, however, just to mention, that some ascribe the intelligence, which they convey, to the immediate inspiration of God. Others, maintaining that we need not resort to a miracle when natural causes are

sufficient ; nor attribute to Moses, as an historian, a supernatural guidance to which he himself made no pretensions, have believed the source of his information to be oral tradition. Others have preferred the supposition of written documents, transmitted to the times of the great Hebrew legislator, and by him compiled and sanctioned. The ingenuity of some modern critics has attempted to distinguish these supposed documents into classes, on principles of internal evidence ; but without arriving at precisely the same results.

We pass over, too, the history of the six days' creation, as not essential to our present object. We will only remark, that some have imagined an absolute creation out of nothing to be described ; while others find in it only an account of the redemption of the earth from a state of chaos, and its preparation for the residence of mankind. Some maintain that it relates strictly a positive fact : while others see in it nothing but a fine picture of the gradual effects that were produced upon our planet, when it was rescued from its primaeval emptiness and darkness. However this may be, it exhibits a perfect model of simple sublimity : interpreted according to the rules, which we should apply to every other record of so remote an antiquity, it is philosophically beautiful ; and as far transcends every other cosmogony, which tradition has preserved as sacred, or mere speculation has devised, as the holy light of which it speaks transcended the shapeless gloom that it dispelled.

Having thus defined the view we are to take, let us turn to the representation of Moses, and say simply what it is. It declares that but a single pair were originally created, from whom have descended all the human race. They were made in the likeness of God. They were good ; a praise, which they shared with all the works of the common Creator. The first man appears in a garden abounding with delights, prepared for him by his Maker ; and all nature is subject to him. He had passed through no helpless infancy, no gradual steps of progress toward maturity. At once he thinks and speaks, he walks and labours. The Lord himself is his immediate teacher. He yet knows no wishes, no feelings, that are not innocent as they are natural. He is not wild and rudé ; nor yet cultivated : not without freedom of will ; but not yet exercised in the use of it. It was yet to be seen whether this freedom would continue to consist with his happiness, or whether its abuse would bring on sorrow, toil and suffering. The first woman is taken out of man ; an image, which illustrates the tenderness of the connexion, that was to exist between them : and the principle of life, of thought, and of will within them both, is the breath of God.

Such is the history: and there are allusions to it in various parts of the sacred writings. David, when he looked up to the starry heavens, expressed his grateful wonder that God should so exalt the feeble children of earth as to give them dominion over the works of his hands, and to put all things under their feet; creating them little lower than the angels, and crowning them with glory and honour. In the 139th Psalm, man is described as "having been curiously wrought in the lower parts of the earth," before he stood erect and living upon it, as its delegated lord: a description evidently drawn from the Mosaic idea of his having been moulded out of the dust. Elihu says in the book of Job, "the spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.—I also am formed out of the clay." The genealogies, 1 Chron. i. 1, are deduced from Adam as the common ancestor. In the same spirit the late Jewish authors wrote; as may be seen in the apocryphal books of the Old Testament: Ecclesiasticus, xvii. 1—3. Wisdom of Solomon x. 1. and xv. 8; and in Philo, who regarded the Mosaic account as historically exact, and yet allegorized every part of it. The era of christianity succeeded. References are now found more frequent, and the style of them is unchanged. Our blessed Lord himself enforced the strong obligation of the marriage covenant, by citing two passages from Moses' history of the creation, Genesis i. 27, and ii. 24. St. Paul frequently borrows from the same source. He speaks of man, 1 Corinthians xi. 7, as "*the image and glory of God*:" and James in his epistle, declaring the iniquity of the tongue, says, "therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after *the similitude of God*." These representations inspire high conceptions of the dignity and worth of human nature. They exalt as much as is possible the import of that celebrated expression, "*the image of God*," which is used by the Hebrew historian and lawgiver no less than four times in two verses; the 26th and 27th of his first chapter. Indeed, is not the whole tendency of the gospel to show that our nature is elevated in itself, as well as to elevate it infinitely more? Is it not its doctrine, that the Son of God himself was man, and died for man? And does it not intreat all, that they should not judge themselves "*unworthy* of the resurrection from the dead?"

To give even a compendious history of the opinions, that have found advocates, concerning the original constitution of man, would be to repeat the innumerable interpretations that have been given in ancient and modern times, of the account in the first chapter of Genesis: an enumeration that instead of

being capable of compression into an essay, would require one of those folios, that were so readily filled in the ages of darkness and controversy. The fathers of the church, the schoolmen, and many later writers, connected with the subject many subtle questions, which were nowise involved in it, and which it would be wasting our time to attempt to disentangle. The turning point of dispute was the phrase, "the image of God:" on this the whole of it was in fact suspended: our labour will therefore be made simple, by directing our attention to this alone.

Before the fifth century there was no schism on this subject. The fathers held different opinions, but without bringing them in any degree into contact with each other. They were unanimous in the assertion, that we are perfectly free to choose and to do either good or evil. Most of them understood by the image of God, the gift of understanding, and freedom of will. Some, however, refining on this idea, and availing themselves of the twofold expression, Genesis i. 26, "let us make man in our *image*, after our *likeness*," maintained that a difference was intended to be implied between them. The *likeness* they supposed to consist in the endowments abovementioned. The divine *image* was entirely distinct. Some saw it in the erect form and heavenward countenance of the human race: others sought it in their destination to immortality; and others still, among whom was St. Chrysostom, the most eloquent of the Greek fathers, imagined it to be exhibited in their "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the face of the earth." The heads of the church at Alexandria, and especially Clement and Origen, asserted that the "Logos" was here referred to, the *original pattern*, according to which the human soul was formed; and by the divine "*likeness*" they understood those moral virtues, by the cultivation of which we may approach to a moral resemblance of the Deity.

This harmonious dissonance in the church, experienced for 400 years, was now to be changed into the harshest and most violent discord. The Pelagian heresy, as it has since been called, broke out; and the western part of Christendom was shaken with it. Pelagius was a monk of Wales, who, conceiving that the prevailing doctrines, which had become connected with the representations of Moses, were dangerous to good morals, and tended to encourage a false presumption, openly opposed them. This engaged him in a controversy with Augustin, which it has filled volumes to describe. The disputants were agreed in this; that Adam was made in the image of God,

and that this consisted partly in the intellectual nature that was bestowed on him, and partly in the freedom of will. They differed in this: Augustin affirmed that the *immortality of the body* was included in the image of God; while Pelagius contended that man was made mortal, and had been from the beginning as he now is. From this time, the opinion concerning the original nature of man was suspended on that concerning the fall, original sin, and the doctrine of grace: in a word, on the triumph of *Pelagianism*, or ORTHODOXY; for so the synod of Carthage and other councils named the parties, by decreeing the victory. The ideas of the perfections and the happiness of the first human pair, and consequently the change that was produced by the fall, seemed now to grow more and more excessive. John of Damascus, who died in the middle of the 8th century, and who was accustomed to follow in all doctrine the most approved guides, gives on this subject the most highly wrought descriptions.*

We have now come down to the schoolmen; of whom it can offend no one to say, that they "worse confounded" the whole "confusion." They proposed gravely a thousand impertinent questions, which, to us at the present day, it would seem as ridiculous to attempt to answer, as it was to ask them. The most celebrated among these were,—whether man was created "in puris naturalibus?" whether the divine image was immediately created with him, or afterwards superadded? whether it was natural, or preternatural? Many, among whom was Duns Scotus, the great Franciscan, declared that it was *natural*: an opinion, which tended towards Pelagianism, and somewhat reduced the lofty conceptions that were then prevalent, of the original divine "image." They were met, however, by other scholastics, with Thomas Aquinas, "the angelical doctor" of the Dominicans, at their head. Aquinas taught that man *might have been* created "in puris naturalibus;" but that the preternatural gifts of heavenly grace came upon him immediately at his creation. He upheld the opinions, which Augustin had first reduced, or rather expanded into a system. George Calixtus, a Lutheran divine of the 16th century, next struck out a middle course, with the hope of reconciling all differences: but he was rewarded with the reproachful name of Pelagian, and had not many followers.

The name of Isaac Peyrere, a Protestant of Bordeaux, now claims notice. Some of his opinions were most bold and singular: but the cogent logic of a prison persuaded him to abjure them

* De fide Orthodoxa, ii. 12.

with his protestantism, at the feet of Pope Alexander VIII. He taught that there were men before Adam, who was the progenitor of the Jews only, and not of the Gentiles; that men were created at the beginning all over the earth; that Adam and Eve were not made at once mature, but grew up like their posterity, from childhood; that they could not possibly attain to holiness and immortality through their original creation; and that no man ever died on account of Adam's transgression.*

The symbolical books of the Lutheran church are in sentiment with Thomas Aquinas: and the theologians of that communion have been so fond of dreaming wonders respecting the condition of the first pair in paradise, that they have scarcely fallen short in extravagance of the schoolmen themselves. Two of Luther's earliest disciples, Francowitz, or Flacius, and Andrew Osiander, made themselves heads of parties: but the point in dispute between them is not worth the trouble of describing to our readers, and we pass on to the Socinians. Socinus, and the Polish divines who were confederate with him, refused to consult on this subject any other authority, than that of their own understanding. They regarded all the high notions of the perfection of virtue and bliss in the paradisiacal state, as superstitious fancies: they denied that a terrestrial immortality, or an immortality to be reached without tasting of death, was ever designed for man, had he continued obedient: they interpreted "the image of God," in which he was made, to mean the permission which he had to command the use of all created things, and to exercise sovereignty over this lower world.

We have said that the Socinians professed to follow their reason only. We should do them injustice, however, not to add, that they avowed this in opposition to human traditions, creeds and commandments, not to the sacred writings. They did not set aside the scriptures, nor appeal to them as less decisive than their brethren of other denominations. If it was their fault to lean too much to their own understandings, we may ask what sect ever existed, that did not claim to be supported by reason? Did not Augustin, as well as Pelagius, reason? Did not Duns and Thomas at least believe they were reasoning?

We have thus said what we intended on the creation of the first man; cursorily, of necessity, but we hope without confu-

* *Præadamitæ*, sive exercitatio super versibus 12, 13 et 14, cap. 5, epist. ad Romanos: quibus inducuntur primi homines ante Adam conditi. A. S. 1655, also, *Systema theol. ex Præadamitarum hypothesis*, A. S. 1655.

This work may be found in the Library of Harvard University.

sion. In another essay we propose to offer a similar abstract of what has been advanced concerning his fall and its consequences : a longer, we fear, and a harder labour.

ON THE USE OF THE TEXT, 1 JOHN, v. 7.

"For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one."

I have lately been informed that the text of the *three heavenly witnesses*, as it is sometimes called, has been quoted in a pulpit at Baltimore, as a good argument for the doctrine of the trinity. Most of the readers of the *Christian Disciple* probably know that the text is spurious. Upon this subject, I have no intention of entering into an argument, but shall merely quote two passages from professedly trinitarian writers.

The first is from an article upon the Improved Version of the New Testament, published in the *Eclectic Review*. The author discovers no feeling of goodwill towards the editors of this version, and writes throughout as a trinitarian, but with much learning and ability, and a considerable degree of candour. Respecting the verse in question, he says ;

"Upon this passage (1 John v. 7.) we need not spend many words. It is found in no Greek manuscript, ancient or recent, except one to which we shall presently advert ;* in no ancient version, being interpolated only in the late transcripts of the Vulgate. Not one of the *Greek Fathers* recognizes it, though many of them collect every species and shadow of argument, down to the most allegorical and shockingly ridiculous, in favour of the doctrine of the Trinity,—though they often cite the words immediately contiguous both before and after,—and though, with immense labour and art, they extract from the next words the very sense which this passage has in following times been adduced to furnish. Of the *Latin Fathers*, not one† has quoted it, till Eucherius of Lyons in the middle of the

* The passage in which the reviewer adverts to this manuscript begins in the following manner. "One Greek manuscript we have said contained the clause. This is the Dublin or Monfortianus, a very recent manuscript, glaringly interpolated from the modern copies of the Vulgate, and distributed into the present division of chapters."

† It has been attempted to be shown that Tertullian and Cyprian have cited the last clause of v. 7. Our readers may be satisfied on this subject, by referring to Griesbach Nov. Test. vol. ii. App. p. 13—15; or Porson's letters to Travis, 240—282; or Marsh's Michaelis, vol. iv. 421—424. See also, for a lamentable contrast, Travis's letters, 3d edit. 82, 53, 75—128.

fifth century ; and in his works there is much reason to believe that it has been interpolated.

“ Under these circumstances, we are unspeakably ashamed that any modern divines should have fought *pedibus et unguibus*, for the retention of a passage so indisputably spurious. We could adduce half a dozen or half a score passages of ample length, supported by better authority than this, but which are rejected in every printed edition and translation.”

The other passage which I shall quote, is one which I have accidentally met with, extracted from a latin letter of bishop Lowth to Michaelis ; published in Michaelis’ *Literarischer Buefwechsel*, (Literary Correspondence,) part 2. p. 428. The following is a translation ; the original I give in a note below.

“ We have some wranglers in theology, sworn to follow their master, who are prepared to defend any thing, however absurd, should there be occasion. But I believe there is no one among us, in the least degree conversant with sacred criticism, and having the use of his understanding, who would be willing to contend for the genuineness of the verse, 1 John v. 7.”*

Such, it seems, is the opinion of learned trinitarians, and many more passages might be quoted to the same purpose. But before bringing the charge of unfairness against those gentlemen who have made use of this verse, we ought to recollect, that they may, very probably, be ignorant that its genuineness has ever been disputed. There is another fact likewise with which, perhaps, they are unacquainted, viz. that some trinitarians, including the great master of modern orthodoxy, Calvin, have thought that the verse, even upon supposition of its genuineness, did not prove so much in favour of the doctrine of the trinity as is commonly supposed. The following is part of Calvin’s comment upon it.

“ The expression, ‘ *these three are one*,’ does not relate to the essence, but to the agreement of the persons spoken of. The meaning is, the Father, and his eternal Word, and Spirit harmoniously bear testimony to Christ. Some copies accordingly read *us iv* [i. e. *agree in one thing*]. But although you read *iv unus* [*are one*] as it is in other copies, still, there is no doubt that the Father, Word, and Spirit are said to be one

* *Habemus in theologia rabulas quosdam in magistri alicujus verba juratos ; nihil est tam absurdum quod illi, si res et occasio ferat, non parati sint defendere. Sed neminem credo jam apud nos esse, in Critica Sacra paulum modo versatum, et cui sanum sit sinciput, qui pro sinceritate commatis 7mi 1 Joh : v. propugnare velit.*

in the same sense as the blood and water and spirit, in the verse immediately succeeding."*

ON PIETY TO GOD.

It is of the first importance in a religious character, to have a regard to the Supreme Being in all actions and undertakings. Yet, even among those who appear to possess a good moral character, it is to be feared that some are destitute of a pious disposition. It is very possible for morality to have no purer spring than self-interest, and no higher aim than the praise of men. Such morality we may speak well of as members of society, for it may contribute largely to our security and well-being in the social state. But we cannot encourage men to place much dependance upon it as christians, because it does not partake at all of the christian spirit. Piety to God is the distinction and the glory of the christian's character. Divest him of this affection of the soul, and you may still call him a moral man, you may still call him a good man, but you cannot call him a christian. In whatever degree he is deficient in this virtue, he so far falls short of true and proper christianity. He has not yet attained to the perfection of that character which he possesses.

It is no less *strange* than it is lamentable that so many should be wanting in piety to God. There is no virtue which possesses so many allurements as this. There is no virtue in favour of which we can present so many powerful, engaging and popular considerations. Every thing within us and without us invites to the cultivation and exercise of this heavenly temper. Every object that meets our eyes points upwards to the One Supreme as its Creator and supporter; and shall not our thoughts be raised in contemplation to the Deity? All our noble and generous feelings spontaneously impel us to go out among the works of God; to talk of him and to praise him; and shall we disobey this divine intimation of our duty? Forbid it conscience, reason, heaven.

* Quod dicit, *tres esse unum*, ad essentiam non refertur, sed ad consensum potius. Ac si diceret, Patrem, et æternum Sermonem ejus ac Spiritum, symphonia quadam Christum pariter approbare. Itaque nonnulli codices habent *ut* *iv.* Verum etiamsi legas *in* *iv.*, ut est in aliis exemplaribus, non tamen dubium est quin Pater, Sermo et Spiritus eodem sensu dicantur unum esse, quo postea sanguis et aqua et Spiritus.

Piety has its foundation in human nature. It approves itself to all our best feelings, it recommends itself to us by its own intrinsic loveliness. Nothing can be more natural, nothing more beautiful, than a rational piety to God. We are so formed by our Creator as to adore what is great, admire what is excellent, and love what is good. And wherein does piety to God consist but in adoring, and admiring, and loving a Being who possesses all these qualities in perfection? A Being, who far surpasses all other beings in majesty and benignity? "For who in the heavens can be compared unto the Lord? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto our God?" Ought we not then to cherish and exhibit towards the Deity those feelings and affections, which his true character is adapted to call forth. This is piety: and surely there is nothing in it that is repulsive to nature; nothing that is visionary or extravagant. Indeed not to possess it would be in the highest degree unnatural; offensive to the very first principles on which we act. We love our friends: ought we not then to love our greatest Friend? We repay with gratitude our benefactors: ought we not to do this to our greatest Benefactor? "We have had fathers in the flesh, and we have done them reverence?" ought we not to pay this same reverence to our heavenly Father, and the Father of all? In short, piety to God is so natural and reasonable, that it cannot but live in the mind of every one whose heart is right. And wherever we do not find it existing, we may conclude that the affections of that man are perverted, or his moral sensibility lost.

Many of the purest pleasures and satisfactions of which the human mind is capable, flow too from piety to God; pleasures and satisfactions which we can derive from no other source. Indeed the cherishing of every good feeling is delightful; but the cherishing of a pious feeling is peculiarly so. Reader! hast thou never felt, in all the experience of thy past life, how pleasant a thing it is to return the kindness of a benefactor with gratitude? to pay back the protection and tenderness of a parent with filial love and reverence and duty? Know then that if you will endeavour to make the same return to God for all the benefits, which you are continually receiving from him; if you will cultivate and exercise towards your heavenly Father those filial sentiments that belong to, and become the affectionate child, the delights you will experience in fulfilling *these* duties, will be as much superiour to that we have just alluded to, as the obligation to do them is greater, and the object of them more worthy. If to discharge our duty to man will give us complacency, how much more will the discharge of our

duty to God give us the same complacency; but in a much more exalted degree?

This is the rejoicing which a man of piety has *in himself*. *He also rejoices in the relation which he is conscious of sustaining to the Deity.* Being in the habit of holding daily intercourse and communion with God, he comes at length to consider him as his *companion and friend*. Regarding him in this light he has a confidence in him, to which a man destitute of piety must forever be a stranger. He feels that he has an interest in God, and he knows also that God has an interest in him. In all the vicissitudes of life, then, there is one Being on whom he can depend; one staff on which he can lean; one rock on which he can safely build,—the Rock of Ages. His piety never forsakes him, and it every where gives him peace. It pours over life a new lustre and lends it new attractions. In prosperity it is present to enhance and multiply our enjoyments, and in adversity it comes in to break the blow of misfortune, or bind up the wounds of the broken-hearted; our guide in life; our support in death; our hope and triumph forever.

To those, who have thought much on our moral weakness and exposure in the present world, it is hardly necessary to insist on the importance of piety considered as the support and the guardian of all our other virtues. We cannot hope to make any very high attainments in the christian life, unless we make this the powerful and animating principle of our conduct. The thoughts of God will overawe and regulate the soul. If we will habituate ourselves to realize God's omnipresence, the impression that he is always about us will sanctify all our labours and hallow all our enjoyments. The idea that he is ever with us; our Father and Friend,—“of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,” will banish from our minds every low, and degrading, and unworthy sentiment, and fire us with the noble ambition to become holy, even as he is holy, and perfect, even as he is perfect.

Piety then, is one of the most rational, and important, and becoming dispositions we are capable of acquiring. We must add in conclusion, that it is absolutely indispensable, in order to secure to ourselves the favour of heaven. Again we feel ourselves called upon to assure our readers that their moral conduct may appear to men unexceptionable; and yet they may be destitute of that vital spirit, without which they can have no claim to the felicity christianity promises to the obedient. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the *first* and

great commandment." And he who begins by breaking *this*, though he may pay a *seeming* respect to the rest, proves himself destitute of the very first principles of true holiness. He should remember that God judges not by the outward appearance of our conduct, but by the motives that influence us in it. And there is a morality which has no better motives than most of our sins; a belief of its present expediency: a morality which does not look for its laws and encouragements, above, or beyond the present world; "which is of the earth, earthy." We find no promises in the gospel to those who are contented with this sort of morality; and we are persuaded that it will not stand the test of the christian's trial.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE RENDERED MORE INTELLIGIBLE
BY A NEW PUNCTUATION.

THAT several instances occur in our printed copies of the Bible, where the text is obscure, in consequence of incorrect punctuation, might be easily shewn. I quote, as examples, a few verses, which, as they are commonly read, lose much of their pertinency; but receive a new meaning by being marked and read as interrogatories.

Genesis iv. 23, 24. Have I slain a man to my wounding? a young man to my hurt?

Matth. xxvi. 45, and Matth. xiv. 41. Do you sleep on now, and take your rest?

Matth. xxvii. 42. He saved others; cannot he save himself?

Mark vii. 9. Do ye well to reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition?

Luke vi. 9. Then Jesus said unto them, I would ask you, What is it lawful to do on the Sabbath-days? Good, or ill? To save, or to destroy?

Luke xvii. 18. Are there none found who returned to give glory to God, except this stranger?

Luke xix. 22. Thou knewest that I was an austere man?

John v. 37, 38. Did ye never hear his voice, or see his form? or have ye forgotten his declaration, that ye believe not him whom he hath sent?

John vii. 28. Do ye know me, and know whence I am?

John xi. 49, 50. Are ye so entirely ignorant? Do ye not consider, that it is expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not?

John xi. 56. What think ye? Will he not come to the feast?

John xii. 27. What shall I say? Father save me from this hour? But for this cause I came to this hour.

John xii. 15. And they said unto her, art thou mad?

Heb. xii 5. Have ye forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as children?

James iv. 5. Do ye think that the scripture speaketh in vain? Doth the spirit that dwelleth in us excite to envy?

IS RELIGIOUS FAITH A REASONABLE PRINCIPLE OF ACTION?

"WE walk by faith, and not by sight." So said the great apostle of our religion. The principle has indeed been abused by the misrepresentations of the ignorant, and by the overheated zeal of enthusiasts. It has been ridiculed by the doubting; and by unbelievers of revelation, has been represented as a principle of action unworthy of thinking and of reasoning men. But cast your eye over your own ordinary transactions, and examine but for a moment the conduct of men in the most common concerns of life, and you will see that this principle, however abused and despised in the affairs of religion, as certainly guides the unbeliever as the christian; and that, without faith in a thousand circumstances and events, of which we cannot have the certainty of knowledge, it would be as impossible to live in the world, as it is impossible for us to please God, without faith in the promises and prospects of the gospel.

It may be proper to remark, that faith respects not only every thing past, of which we have not had the evidence of our senses, but in every action to which we are excited by a regard to the future, that we may strictly and properly be said to act by faith. Observe then how constant, and how extensive is its influence. You retire at night that you may sleep, and with confidence that you will see the coming day. Yet what is this but the *confidence of faith*? You cannot *know* that you will sleep to night, because you slept the last night. You cannot know that you will see the light of to-morrow, because you saw the light of this morning. But on the evidence of your past experience, you *believe*, and *trust*. You provide for your future wants; and you take your food, that you may be nourished and strengthened by it. But you cannot know that this food, instead of nourishing and strengthening you, will not be the cause of disease and of death. That it has hitherto nourished you, is but an argument from experience, on which you

build your faith that it will continue to nourish you. For the removal of any pain or disease, do you take the advice and follow the directions of a physician? Here you exercise faith in his skill; and both he and you exercise it also in the efficacy of the remedies he prescribes. You go out to your accustomed labours. And what is the principle which excites you to this exertion; which gives life and vigour to your efforts? Is it not the *faith* that you will receive the reward of your toils? The husbandman *waiteth for* the precious fruits of the earth, and *hath long patience for them*, till he receive the former and the latter rain. Are you induced, by the advice or the assurance of another, to an experiment, from which you hope for, or are confident of, a better reward of your labours? The end of your faith is still the same,—the reward you anticipate; but the ground of it becomes the experience and the testimony of him, whose advice and practice you have followed. Having committed any task to another, and being told that it is performed, do you pursue your plans with the same assurance, as if you had *seen* that the work was accomplished? It is the *assurance of faith*, which rests perhaps only on your general confidence in the veracity of him whom you have employed. You *believe*, when you are told that one of your neighbours, whom you saw yesterday in health, is to day stretched on the bed of sickness; or that some distant part of the world has been shaken by earthquakes, or destroyed by fire. In fine, in all our conversation, when we neither discern nor suspect a motive to deceive us, nor perceive any absurdity or contradiction in the relation, we readily yield our *faith*, and are actuated by our *belief*. The convictions of faith become as strong as those of sense; and we as truly act by faith when we eat, when we labour, and when we confide in the skill or the veracity of each other, as when, believing the promises of God, we give all diligence to make our calling and our election sure.

But let us extend our views of the operation of this great principle; and trace to their sources some of the actions, or courses of actions in men, of which we may form a judgment not less correct than themselves.

Have you seen the richly freighted vessel, returning to repay the enterprise of her owners? She has been under other skies; in other climes; among other people. She has exchanged the produce of her own soil for that of other regions. They who entrusted their fortunes to the expedition, are now recompensed for their confidence. But follow back the steps of this enterprise, and observe how few of them were guided by actual knowledge. Had he who was most interested in it never seen

the country, to which he sent his property? Then he knew of its existence only from the *testimony of others*; and however ample may have been this testimony, it could have produced only *faith*. He *believed* the existence of the country that had been described to him. He *believed* what he had read or heard of its inhabitants, its productions, and its wants. Led on by this faith, he entrusted his property to the ocean, notwithstanding the uncertainty of winds and waves. He confided in men who might die; or who might be treacherous, as others had been. But it was the strong belief that they would live, that they would be honest, and that the vessel which bore his property would escape storms and shipwreck, as others had escaped them, which animated his hopes of her return, and made him sanguine in his calculations. Seest thou then how faith wrought with his works; and that, but for his faith, he would never have undertaken the enterprise, whose rewards have so greatly enriched him?

Observe a man, the object of whose supreme desire is the glory of a great and distinguished name. He has regard to it in every plan he forms; in every course he pursues. It is almost constantly in his thoughts. It engages his strongest and best affections. He considers the time, and strength, and talents as comparatively lost, which have not been employed in its service. He not only gives his days and nights to toil, and anxiety, and suffering, for the accomplishment of his purpose: not only denies himself innumerable gratifications, which are every day offered to his understanding and his senses; but he exposes himself to every danger; he is every moment ready to meet death, and perhaps actually falls a victim of death, in the great cause to which he has devoted every faculty of his soul. But does he not as truly act by faith, as he does, who, in a course of religion and virtue, is seeking the honour that comes from God only? Is he not equally a *martyr to his faith*, as he is, who submits to death, or incurs the penalty of death, rather than give up his principles as a christian, or renounce his faith in the gospel of Christ? He *believes*, but he cannot *know* that he will obtain the glory that he seeks. And such are all the actions that have regard to the ends of human ambition.

Deprive man of faith in the ordinary course of circumstances and of events, and what would be the consequences? Or suppose any one resolved never to act, but where he had the certainty of knowledge to guide him. He would not labour; for he cannot *know* that he will be rewarded. Or if his family have not the means of support for another day, he will use no

exertions to obtain them ; for he cannot know that either he or they will live till to-morrow. Or if hungry himself, he will not eat ; for it is impossible to be certain that the first food he takes to sustain him, will not be the cause of his death. But I need not pursue the supposition. Its absurdity is apparent. It is glaring. We could no more live without faith in the testimony of others, or of our own observation and experience, than we could live without our senses, or without air. An unbeliever of revelation therefore lives by faith in the ordinary circumstances and events of life, as much as the most zealous disciple of Jesus ; and he who scoffs at faith as a principle of religion, is as much actuated by it in his own daily business and pleasures, as is the most pious in his endeavours to live as the grace of God teaches ; or as the dying christian, who rejoices in the anticipated happiness of heaven.

From this view of faith we infer, first, that it is a *principle of our nature*, equally as hope, or fear, or desire. It is as much a principle of our nature, that we should believe upon sufficient testimony, and conform our conduct to our belief, as that we should like, and dislike ; or, as that we should seek what we love, and avoid that by which we feel aversion. And we should act not less inconsistent with our nature, if we should refuse ever again to be actuated by faith, than if we were resolved henceforth to deny ourselves both food and sleep, and not to trust even for a moment to the evidence of our senses.

Second, In requiring us to walk by faith in his moral government, God demands of us no more than he does in his common providence. And in requiring us to seek the rewards and happiness of heaven, by that faith in Christ and in the instructions of his gospel, which will engage in its service our entire wills and our best affections, he demands no more than we cheerfully do every day, to obtain the riches and the pleasures of the world. It is an appointment of the *providence of God*, that we should believe the labour of spring and summer, to be necessary for the security of a harvest in the autumn. It is an appointment of the *moral government of God*, that we should believe in the necessity of a life of religious and moral obedience—a character and life conformed to his revealed will,—in order to his final approbation of us, and our eternal happiness. Admit the doctrine, that God is a moral Governor, and there is far more evidence of an inseparable connexion between our hearts and habits and character here, and our condition hereafter—between our present moral state and our future happiness,—than between our best directed labours, and the

riches and pleasures of the world for which we make so many efforts, and submit to so many sufferings. Though our labours are necessary to obtain the fruits of autumn, and we have sufficient grounds for our faith that, in due season we shall reap if we faint not, yet *here*, it may be, that a burning sun may dry up the springs of vegetation; or a desolating storm may tear it from its roots; or innumerable insects may be commissioned to devour it; or, at the very moment when our work of preparation is about to terminate, death may arrest us,—another may become the heir of our possessions, and enjoy the long anticipated fruits of our exertions and our hopes. But if God is a moral Governor, and the great purposes of his government are not accomplished in this world, by the full reward of piety and virtue, and the full punishment of impiety and vice, it is as certain as that God lives, and is wise, and holy, and good, that these purposes will be completely effected hereafter. In proportion then as the rewards and punishments of the future life are more certain, than the attainment of the objects of our faith in this life,—and they are so, in proportion as our future existence is more certain than it is whether we shall live till to-morrow, or to the greatest age of man,—in the same proportion is it more reasonable, that we should live by faith in the objects of eternity, than in those of this world.

By this view of faith we are therefore led, thirdly, to a comparison of the objects themselves of this world, to the pursuit of which we are prompted by the faith of obtaining them, with those in which God demands our faith as accountable and immortal beings. By the light of God's word, examine his moral government; and by the aid of the same light, penetrate as far as you can into that eternal futurity, in which the soul, purified by intercourse with its Creator, and by obedience to his laws, will see him as he is; will become one of the bright and happy society that encircles his throne; and, forever delivered from pain, and sorrow, and want, will forever advance in knowledge, and piety, and virtue, and happiness. On the objects here presented to our contemplation and promised to our fidelity, let attention be fixed, till the mind and heart have formed such sentiments as they are capable of obtaining, of the grandeur and worth of the prize of steady confidence in God, and of persevering devotion to his will. Then bring together every good that the world can give you; and say, which shall hereafter be the objects of your highest love, your strongest solicitude, and your most earnest pursuit. Do you waver in making your choice? I will only remind you, that the things which are seen—which can here be possessed and enjoyed,—are *temporal*. But the things which are unseen are *eternal*.

MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

KNOWLEDGE OF ONE ANOTHER IN THE FUTURE STATE.

THE question, whether we shall know our friends in the future world, has at some time probably interested every christian. Little direct information is to be gathered from the scriptures, and different opinions are prevalent, formed with various degrees of decision. Perhaps the following extract from a letter of Bishop Watson, though short, comprehends all that can be fairly said upon the subject.

“Our Saviour has said, that ‘we shall be like the angels of God,’ immortal; yet St. John has said, ‘It doth not yet appear what we shall be:’ there is no contradiction in this. We are sure of immortal life; but the connexions, habits, relations, intercourses of that life, are not revealed to us. I dare not speak with confidence on a subject whereon St. John professes his ignorance.

“Had you asked me, whether we should in a future state experience pain, and sorrow, and death, I should have answered, No. Had you asked me, whether we should retain a memory of our good and bad deeds, I should have answered, Yes; because I am certain that the righteous Judge will give such a righteous judgment, that every individual will have a consciousness of its rectitude. But when you ask me, whether we shall know one another in a future state, I hesitate in my reply. All that can certainly be known on the subject is this,—That God will not withhold from those, whom he adopts as his sons, any thing which can contribute to their happiness; and if the earthly connexions formed in this first scene of existence will contribute to our happiness, they will be continued to us, and that continuance implies a future recognition of beloved connexions. Yet, on the other hand, it may be said, if we know our friends and retain sentiments of affection towards them, we must also know our enemies, and thus be again exposed to emotions of fear, dislike, aversion: but in a future state we expect freedom from bad passions, and real tranquillity of mind; and it is probable that human affections will be absorbed in the love of God and of our Saviour.

“The strongest text for our mutual knowledge in a future state, occurs in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, chap. ii. ver. 19, where Paul says, that ‘They will be his hope, his

joy, his crown of glorying in the presence of Jesus Christ at his coming.' There is a similar expression 2 Cor. chap. i. ver. 14."

REPENTANCE.

BOTH reason and revelation instruct us to believe that the Creator of the universe wills the happiness of his creatures, not for his own sake, but for theirs. It would be impious to suppose that our vices could disturb his peace, or our virtues augment His felicity; this would be to make a God with the passions of a man, to render the infinite perfection of the Creator dependent on the imperfection of the creature. When, therefore, we read of the punishment denounced in the gospel against all manner of wickedness, we may properly consider the threatening as the gracious warning of a wise and affectionate Father, rather than as the tyrannical declaration of a cruel and vindictive God. Vice, and consequent misery arising from loss of health, of character, of fortune, of self government, and other sources, are generally, if not universally, connected together in this world, and we may from reason analogically infer that, if there is another world, they will be so connected there also. Now it hath pleased God, through Jesus Christ, to assure us that there is another world, and to confirm this analogical inference by a positive declaration, that the connexion which we observe here between vice and misery will remain hereafter. This declaration is made to us as if it were the arbitrary appointment of God that punishment should follow sin, rather than a certain consequence springing from the nature of things, that misery should follow vice; but the conclusion rests on the same foundation in whatever way we consider the matter; for what is the nature of things, what is the constitution of this world and of the next, but the positive appointment of God himself? Transgress and die, is a positive law; Be vicious and be miserable, is a natural law; they are equally the means of God's moral government of free agents; the latter is intimated to us by reason, the former is promulgated by the gospel, and they are, like their Author, both of them immutable. But these are not the only laws of God's moral government; there is another intimated to us by reason, and clearly made known to us by the gospel, and it is a law which mitigates the severity of the others, which administers consolation to our fears, and strength to our inability; it is this,—Repent and be forgiven—turn from wickedness, do that which is lawful and right; and though you have sinned you shall save your

soul alive ; this is the voice of Revelation ; and reason says, Cease from vice, and you will lessen if not entirely annihilate the misery attendant on it.

Repentance is a change of mind accompanied by a change of conduct ; this change of mind is then most perfect when it proceeds from the fear of God, from fear grounded on our love to him, and regulated by filial reverence and humble confidence in his mercy ; and it is then most sincere and certain when it is followed by change of conduct, from viciousness to sobriety of manners, from habitual sinfulness to habitual righteousness of life. A man may be actuated by a fear of punishment, and change his conduct from vice to virtue ; but this does not, strictly speaking, imply such a change of mind as is essential to true repentance. When a man abstains from murder, theft, robbery, merely because he fears a gallows ; when he conceals his intemperance, pride, envy, malignity, and evil propensities of any kind, merely to preserve his character from censure, and to exhibit a fair outside to the world, his heart is not right, his mind is not changed, his old man is not put off, his repentance is nothing. But—when a man might commit sin with secrecy, and, as to all human tribunals, with impunity ; when he might indulge his sensuality, gratify his revenge, satiate his envy, feed his malignity, without danger to his health, fame or fortune ; when he might do these things, and yet abstains from doing them, because God has forbidden him to do them, and because he is persuaded that God loves him, and forbids him nothing but with a gracious design to preserve him from misery here and hereafter,—then is his repentance sincere, his obedience is a reasonable service, his heart is in a proper state of resignation, humility, love, trust, and gratitude, toward the Author of all good.

WRITTEN AFTER A SUMMER SHOWER.

THE rain is o'er—How dense and bright
Yon pearly clouds reposing lie !
Cloud above cloud, a glorious sight,
Contrasting with the dark blue sky !

In grateful silence earth receives
The general blessing ; fresh and fair,
Each flower expands its little leaves,
As glad the common joy to share.

The softened sunbeams pour around
A fairy light, uncertain, pale ;

The wind flows cool ; the scented ground
Is breathing odours on the gale.

Mid yon rich clouds' voluptuous pile,
Methinks some spirit of the air,
Might rest to gaze below awhile,
Then turn to bathe and revel there.

The sun breaks forth—from off the scene,
Its floating veil of mist is flung ;
And all the wilderness of green
With trembling drops of light is hung.

Now gaze on nature—yet the same,—
Glowing with life, by breezes fann'd,
Luxuriant, lovely, as she came
Fresh in her youth from God's own hand.

Hear the rich music of that voice,
Which sounds from all below, above ;
She calls her children to rejoice,
And round them throws her arms of love.

Drink in her influence—low born care,
And all the train of mean desire,
Refuse to breathe this holy air,
And mid this living light expire.

EPITAPH ON AN UNFORTUNATE YOUNG LADY.

[The following verses were written by the celebrated philosopher, Dugald Stewart. In the Annual Register for 1815, they are copied from a volume of poems published by Dr. Drennan. Our readers, we believe, will think with us, that they are distinguished by their elegance and tenderness. They may remind one of Pope's beautiful epitaph on Mrs. Corbett. Both agree in celebrating that quiet, unpretending patience, than which, perhaps, there are few virtues of higher value in the sight of heaven.]

A LINGERING struggle of misfortune past,
Here patient virtue found repose at last ;
Unpraised, unknown, with cheerful steps she stray'd
Through life's bleak wilds, and fortune's darkest shade ;
Nor courted fame to lend one friendly ray,
To gild the darkening horrors of the way.

When fir'd with hope, or eager for applause,
The hero suffers in a public cause,
Unfelt, unheeded, falls misfortune's dart,
And fame's sweet echoes cheer the drooping heart.
The patriot's toils immortal laurels yield,
And death itself is envied in the field.

Her's was the humbler, yet severer fate,
To pine unnotic'd in a private state;
Her's were the sufferings which no laurels bring,
The generous labours which no muses sing,
The cares that haunt the parent and the wife,
And the still sorrows of domestic life.

What though no pageant o'er her humble earth,
Proclaim the empty honours of her birth!
What though around no sculptur'd columns rise,
No verse record the conquests of her eyes!
Yet here shall flow the poor's unbidden tear,
And feeble age shall shed his blessings here:

Here shall the virtues, which her soul possess'd,
With sweet remembrance soothe a husband's breast:
And here, in silent grief, shall oft repair
The helpless objects of her latest care,
Recall her worth, their adverse fate bemoan,
And in a mother's woes forget their own.

CHAUCER'S PREACHER.

[Mr. Orton has said, "there is much truth and weight in these lines."
This commendation appears rather cold, for the poetry of the passage is
as fine as its wisdom. It is an imitation of Chaucer by Dryden.]

He bore his great commission in his look;
But sweetly temper'd awe, and soften'd all he spoke.
He preach'd the joys of heav'n and pains of hell, }
And warn'd the sinner with becoming zeal: }
But on eternal mercy lov'd to dwell.
He taught the gospel rather than the law:
And forc'd himself to drive; but lov'd to draw.
For fear but frightens minds; but love, like heat,
Exhales the soul sublime, to seek her native seat.
To threats, the stubborn sinner oft is hard:
Wrapt in his crimes, against the storm prepar'd.
But, when the milder beams of mercy play,
He melts, and throws his cumbrous cloak away.
Lightnings and thunder, (Heaven's artillery)
As harbingers before the Almighty fly:
Those, but proclaim his style, and disappear;
The stiller sound succeeds; and God is there.

REVIEW.

ARTICLE IV.

Glorying in the Cross: A sermon delivered before the Associated Congregational Ministers of Salem and [its] vicinity, at Malden, Massachusetts, on Tuesday Sept. 8, 1818.
By JAMES SABINE, late Pastor of the Congregational Church, St. Johns, Newfoundland. Published by request.

WE feel some reluctance to make any reference to this sermon; because whatever notice we may take of it, will give the author a consideration to which he is not entitled. It contains an attack upon the Unitarian clergy of our country, particularly those of Boston, and upon the citizens of our metropolis generally. Some of our readers may recollect, that it is about a year, since the same person preached a sermon in commemoration of the benevolence of the citizens of this place, in relieving the sufferings of the inhabitants of St. John's, where he then resided; and had, if we mistake not, some further agency in expressing their gratitude. The character of the present discourse may be estimated from the following passage.

"But there is another class of teachers. 'Certain men crept in unawares who privily bring in damnable heresies, denying the only Lord, and our Lord Jesus Christ—even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with *feigned words* make merchandize of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.'—Whether this passage of Scripture be a prophecy, or a description of what had actually taken place, or whether it partakes of the nature of both, is of little consequence in our present discussion. It is very evident that the same 'Spirit' which 'speaketh expressly' speaketh '*truly*' when he says 'that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. *Speaking lies*, (not openly) but in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with an hot iron.' These *certain men* who bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them, do it by *stealth*, *creeping in unawares* and *privily*, with *feigned words* and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple, by which to serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, do through *covetousness* make merchandize of the unwary. In putting these passages of Scripture together, I was never more forcibly struck with any thing in my life, than with the exact resem-

blance which the description bears to the once disguised, but now unmasked Unitarian clergy of these regions.

"The true character of this class of pretenders to the order of Christian ministers is delineated by themselves, or at least by an apostle of their own, and therefore to give them the credit for telling the truth in this case, can be no slander. They tell us that they propagate their sentiments by *cautious* and *prudent* sermons, gradually and insensibly bringing over converts to their system. Persons thus converted, while beguiled into *insensibility*, must be very senseless converts at best. A confessor prophet of their's tells us, that 'No reformation from prevailing errors could take place if those who are acquainted with the truth should, through fear of persecution, conceal it from public view'—and 'That it is base and unbecoming the dignity of a man in this nineteenth century, in this land of liberty and free inquiry, to bow down to popular absurdities and superstitions, and quietly to abandon the unalienable right of private judgment.' This is certainly the most manly way of propagating Unitarianism; the other must be a very base and *senseless* way: but these two ways involve no small contradiction, and indeed it must be so, for *hypocrisy* and *absurdity* are always near kindred.

"In opposing these enemies of the cross, there is but *one weapon* to be used, and a powerful and efficient one it is—'The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.' Preach the word, continue instant in season and out of season, rebuke, exhort, reprove with all long suffering and doctrine. Let there be no truce or compromise with these doctrines, assail them by all possible and legitimate means. Institute a most systematic attack, by preaching among these benighted people wherever an opening offers. Let your mission to these regions of darkness be as direct and systematic as your mission to the Chickasaw and the Choctaw Indians."

But whatever may be the character of the sermon, or its author, we think its publication is so connected with certain other facts which we shall point out, as to give it a sort of importance. It does not stand unrelated and alone. It is not Mr. Sabine, but some of those, whose language he speaks, and who have connected themselves with him, who will be the objects of our animadversion in the remarks which we are about to make.

The first thing, we shall observe, is that this sermon, probably from the circumstance of its gross inconsistency with what had been previously known of the author, seems to have attracted more notice than other similar productions; and many of our friends appear to have an erroneous impression, that there is something of novelty in this style of attack. But the fact is quite otherwise. The author has been with men who have taught him his manners and his language. He came here, we may reasonably suppose, favourably impressed toward the citizens of Boston. These first impressions he had to unlearn, and to acquire a different set of opinions and feelings. He has indeed made rapid proficiency, but he has not yet excelled his masters. We will point out a few of those compositions

which may have been given him to study ; and produce some quotations to show the correctness of the assertions we have made.

Our readers may, in the first place, turn to the two reviews relating to the Unitarian Controversy, as it has been called, which appeared in the *Panoplist* ; where he will find the following passages :

Mr. Belsham "has shown us that many of his order," that is, many clergymen in our country, "would have one religion for the vulgar and another for the wise."—*Panoplist*, vol. xi. for 1815. p. 250.

They are guilty of "a hypocritical concealment of their sentiments." p. 251.

"The manner in which Unitarianism is propagated deserves a few moments attention." * * * * * Its advocates, or as the reviewer calls them, 'the advocates of Socinianism,' "have clandestinely crept into orthodox churches;" and "behave in a base hypocritical manner at which common honesty revolts." pp. 259, 260.

"The conduct of Mr. Belsham, rotten as he is, in point of doctrine to the very core, is purity itself compared with the conduct of these," i. e. of the Unitarians generally of this country. p. 262.

"We have long since ceased to be surprised at any measure which could propagate the principles in question." p. 256.

'The Unitarians' "universally bedaub each other with all the fulsome adulation which they can collect and invent." * * * * "It is nauseating, it is intolerable, to find such daubing upon every page." pp. 262, 263.

Respecting their conduct toward the orthodox. "In pretence all is politeness and liberality ; in practice we find a rancour bitter as death and cruel as the grave." p. 264.

"How different" is the conduct of Mr. Belsham, "from the disguise of our Unitarians, and their whining complaints about illiberality in the orthodox in refusing to exchange with them." p. 265.

"The liberal party" "mutilate the New Testament, reject nearly all the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, and degrade the Saviour to the condition of a fallible, peccable, and ignorant man." p. 271.

Respecting our University we are told,

"It is no longer what it once was. The lustre of science still shines, but the sun of Christianity is eclipsed." p. 259.

It is asserted of this Institution, in a hypothetical form of expression it is true, but one at the same time which conveys the meaning as distinctly as an express assertion—"that being, as it were, the heart of the Commonwealth, it is sending poisonous blood to the very extremities of the body politic." p. 259.

Respecting "the highest officer in that venerable seminary," we are informed ;

"That he has thought it a proper employment of his time to sit down coolly to a composition," which was afterwards "thrown into the world

to furnish new jests for the profane, and increase the natural antipathy of men to religion." p. 268.

He has been guilty of "one of the most pernicious and one of the most culpable examples of scoffing at religion which can any where be found." He, and the authors of many other articles in the Anthology, we are told by a direct implication, belong to the "race of scoffers;" and the passage which has excited all this offence, is said to be "written in a style which exactly suits the views and feelings of the Unitarian school." Vol. xii. p. 233 comp. vol. xi. p. 268.

The Panoplist reviewer, we think, need not fear at present that he will be outdone and superseded by Mr. Sabine. There is one trait indeed of the production of the former, which the latter gentleman has not yet attempted to imitate; and that is, the intermixture of exhortations to charity and moderation, with such specimens of the practice of these virtues as we have quoted.

"Let the orthodox," he says, "deal with their offending brethren in a solemn, affectionate, tender manner." vol. xi. p. 266.

"To treat their opponents with asperity, contempt, or reproach, is unworthy of them as Christians or as men." p. 266.

We wonder how this reviewer would write if he should be so unfortunate as to lose his temper; should be moved to something like asperity and reproach; and should in consequence cease to treat his brethren in such a tender and affectionate manner as he has done. In respect to *reproach* indeed, either this reviewer has entirely changed his opinion, or one of his brother reviewers considers him as in a gross error; for what is here declared to be unworthy of a Christian or a man is, in a late article in the same publication, vindicated as a right from which the author thinks that he cannot be debarred without suffering great injustice.

"And is it come to this, that they who are charged to 'contend earnestly for the faith,' must see the Bible assailed, the Saviour denied, and the whole fabric of religion swept away, without uttering one breath of **REPROACH** against the authors of this moral desolation? Silence here, is treason against the King of Zion. The men, who openly revile or studiously disguise the grand peculiarities of the Christian system, *deserve* reproach. Let them, who preach, or encourage others to preach in this manner, look to it."*

There is an indefiniteness in the application of this language, in the connexion in which it stands, which may perhaps leave

* Panoplist for January, 1819. Review of Dr. Porter's Sermon, p. 18.

the author at liberty to affirm that he did not use it concerning any clergymen, or any Christians among us; but concerning "Priestley, Belsham, and the great oracles of German theology," whom he has coupled together in a rather singular union. How it will be applied by others, however, and how he meant it should be applied, will be sufficiently obvious from such passages as the following, which occur in the preceding part of the article.

"We have no reason to fear that the lax theology of our own country, unaided, as it must be, by civil proscriptions and penalties, can ever succeed to silence the voice of truth in our pulpits. But we ought not to regard with indifference the struggles for ascendancy, which this system has maintained in the heart of New England; and the efforts, which it still makes, to decry the great and peculiar doctrines of the gospel."

After having given these few specimens of the language, which has been used concerning a large proportion of Christians among us, it may be worth while to add a single passage, to show how, in the opinion of at least one writer in the *Panoplist*, these heretics, both clergymen and private Christians, ought to be treated. It is from an essay intended to prove *the want of Ecclesiastical Tribunals*.

"But to call ministers to account for *heresy* is a domination over conscience! an intolerant attempt to crush free inquiry! forcing men to adopt your explanations of scripture! denying that the Bible is a sufficient rule of faith without human creeds! forcing technical and scholastic terms into the place of revelation! But not so fast. Do you not call *private* brethren to account for heresy? If not, you are transgressors of as plain precepts as are to be found in the Bible. 'A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.' For heresy alone Hymenæus and Alexander were 'delivered unto Satan;' though nothing worse appears against them, than an attempt to explain away the doctrine of the resurrection. Heresy, which is said to be permitted only to make a clear and public distinction between true and false professors, is numbered among the most abominable works of the flesh. All this, you may say (profanely enough) is the language of the severe and ardent Paul. What then says the charitable and sweet tempered John, who, it will be allowed, had as much love as any modern latitudinarian? What says he? Only read his three epistles, and you will need no more to convince you, that heresy is as decisive a proof of irreligion, and as noticeable by the church, as any immorality. At this an uproar is raised; the cry on every hand is, The Council of Trent over again! The horrors of the Inquisition! A crusade against free inquiry and the rights of conscience! I leave the declaimers to settle this dispute of interjections with Paul and John, and go on to say that if it is no tyranny to discipline *private* brethren for heresy, neither is it to deal with ministers. What would the objector have you do when there shall be false teachers among you, who shall *PRIVILY* bring in damnable heresies, *even denying the Lord that bought them*, and bring upon themselves swift destruction; and (when) many shall follow their pernicious ways, *by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.*"

Permit the gentle John to answer. What says he? 'If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him, God speed; for he that biddeth him, God speed, is a partaker of his evil deeds.' **

We might go on to quote other specimens, equally to our purpose with those which we have given. But we conceive

* The author of the above paragraph, who discovers such an indifference to all outeries respecting intolerance and ecclesiastical domination, appears to have similar feelings to those of the Recorder of London, who upon the trial of that GREAT heretic, William Penn, declared, *that it never would be well with England, till they had something like the Spanish Inquisition in that country.* Respecting the misuse of scripture in the passage above quoted, the reader may consult some Remarks upon the article in question, published in the General Repository and Review, vol. II. p. 283 seqq. Campbell's Dissertation on *Heresy*, prefixed to his translation of the Gospels. Clerici Historia Ecclesiastica p. 495 seqq. Ann. LXXXIII.—The English words *heresy* and *heretic*, do not correspond in meaning to the Greek words which are thus rendered in the common version. *Ἁἱρεσις* (rendered *heresy*) as used in the New Testament, means *sect, party, division, or faction.* In the common version, it is translated *sect* in the following passages:—Acts v. 17. xv. 5. xxiv. 5. xxvi. 5. xxviii. 22. *Ἁἱρετικός* (rendered *heretic*) which is used but once in the New Testament, where it is connected as an adjective with *ἄνθρωπος* (*man*) viz. Titus iii. 10, means in that place either *a man, who joins a new sect, that is, separates himself from the great body of Christians who were connected with, and acknowledged the authority of the apostles, or it means one busy in founding such a sect, a factious man, a promoter of divisions.* It is understood in the latter sense by Campbell and Wakefield, the last of whom, in his translation of the New Testament, thus renders the passage: "A fomentor of divisions reject, after the first and second admonition." The *criterion* of such a person, he observes in a note, may be found in Rom. xvi. 17. On this word, beside the writers above referred to, the reader may consult with profit a tract by Caleb Fleming, entitled *St. Paul's Heretic; or several Characteristics of a Heretic collected from St. Paul's Epistle to Titus.*

Such is the true meaning of the Greek words in question, as used in the New Testament. The following statement, in connexion with what has been just said, will enable us to understand those passages which have been supposed to relate to *heretics* and *heresy*, and which have in consequence been so much misapplied and abused. The apostles, at the time when they wrote, were the authorized teachers of Christianity, miraculously commissioned for this purpose, the representatives of Christ himself. But amid the great moral and intellectual revolution which was going on under their direction, the breaking up and loosening of all old opinions, and the substitution of better doctrines, some men appeared who sought to become leaders of sects among Christians, without acknowledging the authority of the apostles. But in refusing to acknowledge the authority of the commissioned teachers of Christianity, their principles went of course to the destruction of Christianity itself. They were endeavouring to put themselves in the place of the apostles. They were at the same time, as appears from the notices which we have of them, unprincipled men, condemned by their own consciences, seeking some private gain or gratification in the founding of new sects, and whose doctrines led to gross immorality. It is perfectly consistent with the most common notions of

that our readers will begin to sympathize with us in the sense of weariness and disgust, which such an employment produces. We have established the fact, which we wished to prove, that whatever feelings may have been excited by the production, the title of which we have placed at the head of this article, it is really of the same character with others, which have been appearing for a series of years. We have shewn, that there were before writers among us, whose thoughts the author of this sermon has only borrowed, and whose temper and decency he has only imitated.

Since the publication of this sermon, its author has been ordained, or installed, as the pastor of a new society collected in

propriety, right, and duty, that the apostles should speak of these men with strong reprobation, and that they should warn their new converts against being seduced by them, or having any communion or intercourse with them. All this, it is needless to say, is very simple and easily understood. We may, however, further observe, that the directions of the apostles were rendered particularly necessary, by the unsettled state of the first believers, and the imperfect and erroneous notions, which it appears that many of them entertained, of the religion which they professed. But in any period, and in any state of things, if unprincipled men should appear, forming new sects, and teaching doctrines which lead to the destruction of religion and morality, it would be an obvious duty not to recognize them as Christians, and to have no intercourse with them which might countenance and favour their purposes. To such men, and to such only, the commands of the apostles are indirectly applicable. But their language, as every one knows, has been applied in a very different and most unjustifiable manner. The violent of almost every sect have continually represented themselves and their sect, as the only true believers, the only real followers of Christ and his apostles, and have denounced the great body of Christians who differed from them as, *heretics*; and have proceeded to apply to them all the characteristics of the early disturbers of the church, as of course included in the name.

Dr. Stebbing, a divine of the church of England, wrote several pamphlets on the subject of heresy, in controversy with the celebrated Baptist Foster, the same who *excelled ten metropolitans in preaching well*. Stebbing was a zealous and laborious defender of the right of THE CHURCH to discipline heretics. But we suspect that most of those who adopt his principles on this subject, will think his candour sufficiently indiscreet. He says, "If you will but allow the same liberty of judgment to the ministers of Christ in the execution of their office, which you allow to every single man besides in the direction of his conduct in all cases (which one would think to be a very reasonable demand) this you will see; that they who to them shall appear by the best use of their judgments, under the direction of God's word, to have departed from the faith, whether *with* knowledge or *against* knowledge; whether *sincerely* or *insincerely*, are to them heretics, and must be treated as such. * * * * * According to this account, I confess it will follow, that a man may be a heretic to *one* Church, who is not a heretic to *another*; and a heretic to *both*, who is not a heretic to *God*. This may be lamented as the effect of human weakness and frailty. But now infallibility is ceased, otherwise it cannot be." See *A Letter to Mr. Foster on the Subject of Heresy*. By Henry Stebbing D. D. 2d Ed. 1735. pp. 25, 26.

our metropolis to enjoy the benefit of his ministry. Of the clergymen who assisted at this religious ceremony, no differences of theological opinion, wide as they may be, would lead us to speak with disrespect; but we regret not a little that they have taken part in this transaction. It appears to us one proof among many, of the pernicious effects, which such writings as we have noticed are gradually producing upon the moral feelings and judgment of men. The person at whose ordination they have assisted, has said of the Unitarian clergy of this part of the country, that they are hypocrites, enemies of religion, assuming their offices for the sake of gain, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron. There are various considerations, which may prevent even a momentary feeling of resentment against the author of these charges in the persons thus attacked. But the charges are either true or false; and if they are false, their author is thoroughly disqualified for the office of a Christian minister. The gentlemen however of whom we have spoken, by assisting at his ordination, have said that this man is fit for the office of a Christian minister. They have thus virtually declared, that his assertions are true. We have charity enough still to believe, that they regard these assertions as utterly false, and that they would be very unwilling to use such language themselves. But if this be so, what are we to think of their agency in the transaction we have mentioned?

It appears from the statements which we have made, that there has been for a long time, a systematic attack, not upon the opinions, but upon the characters, of a large proportion of Christians among us. It has been carried on in such a manner as to excite in those, who have any sympathy with the writers engaged in it, feelings the most hostile to that temper and spirit which a disciple of Christ ought to cultivate, and thus to destroy what is essential to the Christian character. A stream of calumny has been pouring out for years, and spreading poison through the community, wherever a channel could be found or made for it. There has hitherto been but little attempt to stop its course. They who have been more particularly the objects of reproach, have trusted to their lives to vindicate their reputations. They have been reviled, and have been patient. There is more than one unanswered falsehood, on which *three thousand suns have gone down*. They have listened to the most insulting charges, and have heard propositions to exclude them from the name and privileges of Christians; and have in return begged their opponents to remember what is due to Christian charity, and to refrain from rending in pieces the church of

Christ. For the advancement of those opinions which they believe the truth, they have trusted, perhaps they have trusted a great deal too much, to the gradual progress of knowledge and intellectual improvement. They have perceived, or thought that they perceived, that the doctrines which they hold were incorporated with, and received confirmation, from every science connected with religion; and that at every advance in the critical knowledge of the scriptures, they opened more fully to view. We have, it may be, been too ready to leave our opinions to make their own way, and have too much forgotten the obstacles which they had to encounter. But our very moderation has been turned into a crime; and because we have been unwilling to obtrude our principles and arguments upon those who could not, or would not understand them; because we have perceived that religious error is often so blended with the most important truth, that a delicate and patient hand is required to remove the one without injury to the other; because we have thought sincere piety, and a good life, the only evidences of real religion, and that these might exist together with many speculative mistakes, which it was little worth while to disturb; because, to say all in one word, we have discovered no intemperate or injudicious zeal in making proselytes; we have in consequence been accused of a hypocritical concealment of our opinions.

When charges are brought which, if true, or if originating from any respectable source, would seriously affect the moral characters of individuals, it becomes important to examine from what source they do originate. Those on which we have been remarking, are, as we have seen, principally to be traced to the *Panoplist*. By whom then, it is a fair, nay, it is an unavoidable question, has that work been conducted? It was commenced and continued for some time under the superintendence of a man, of whom, fortunately, it is wholly unnecessary to speak, because his character is perfectly well known. It has since been continued by a person, of whom, on the other hand, we believe very little is known, except that he is the editor of a work, which discovers a spirit of which we have given sufficient specimens; and probably the principal author of the articles which we have quoted, and of others of a similar character. If this supposition be incorrect, we at least do him no injustice, for as the editor of the work in which they have appeared, he is equally responsible for their *moral character*, with the authors themselves. To these individuals we may now add the author of the sermon we have noticed, as having rendered himself equally conspicuous. It is a few men, such as

these, who have been so faithfully labouring, and not altogether without success, to excite a spirit of disunion and hostility in the Christian community. There is something unpleasant in this particular notice of individuals, however justifiable it may be. But we feel ourselves in some sort compelled to it. We should regret not a little to implicate in our remarks respecting certain writings, any persons to whom these remarks do not justly apply; and in order to prevent this in the most effectual manner, we must point out the writers, or the description of writers, to whom we consider that they *do* apply.

The system of attack of which we have spoken, is expressly or virtually directed against a very large proportion of those in our community, who are the most conspicuous objects of public respect and confidence. Look to those who guide public opinion, to those who administer your laws in the highest seats of justice, to your most distinguished magistrates, to your ministers of religion, to those who have given the most faithful attention to the study of the scriptures, to your most enlightened instructors of youth, to the most eminent among your scholars and literary men, and see how many of them, men too of unblemished lives, and apparently sincere believers, will fall into the class of those, whom the Panoplist reviewer would teach you to regard as destitute of all real moral goodness, without religion, enemies to Christ and to God, destined to everlasting misery, hypocrites and reprobates. Some writer in the Panoplist will perhaps accuse us again of praising our friends. It is a happy thought, and has been repeated already, we do not know how many times. But we have learnt our morality in a different school from that of the writers in the Panoplist; and do not think it an offence, when the reputation of our friends is attacked, to state their just claims to respect.

It is characteristic of the class of writers on whom we are remarking, both as they have existed in past times, and as they exist at the present day among ourselves, to appear to enjoy a sort of gratification and triumph in denouncing the wrath of God upon those Christians who refuse to adopt their opinions; in representing them as certainly exposed to everlasting destruction, in asserting or implying that the time is soon coming, when, they themselves being ministering angels, giving glory to God, their opponents shall lie howling and blaspheming with the devils, condemned forever to the hottest flames, and fiercest torments of hell. We do not mean to shock or offend our readers. We have a purpose, and an important one, in view. It is not in idleness or in sport, that we have conducted them to a lazar-house, where they may see some of the worst dis-

eases of the human mind; and no weakness or loathing ought to prevent us from finishing the examination. We have rather refrained from giving specimens of the kind of writing of which we have last spoken; but we will produce one most offensive example of it from a sermon of the Rev. Lyman Beecher; after quoting one or two preceding passages to show its application.

This gentleman says:

"To secure evangelical affections, the following truths are as essential, according to the nature of the human mind, as fire is essential to heat, or any natural cause to its appropriate effect; the doctrines of the Trinity, and the atonement, the entire unholiness of the human heart, the necessity of a moral change by the special agency of the Holy Spirit, and justification by the merits of Christ, through faith."*

Again:

"The fact is, that those, who discard the doctrine of the Trinity, discard usually every other fundamental doctrine. Their system is not merely different from, but opposite to that denominated orthodox; so that if one be true, the other is false; if one be sincere milk, the other is poison."†

After these, and other similar passages, the discourse concludes in the following manner:

"In the view of what has been said, how momentous is the responsibility of ministers of the gospel; and how aggravated the destruction of those, who keep back the truth, or inculcate falsehood. It is, as if a man, not content with his own destruction by famine, should extend the desolation, by withholding nutrition from all around him; or not content with poisoning himself, should cast poison into all the fountains, putting in motion around him the waters of death. If there be a place in the world of despair, of tenfold darkness, where the wrath of the Almighty glows with augmented fury, and whence, through eternity, are heard the loudest wailings, ascending with the smoke of their torment:—in that place I shall expect to dwell, and there, my brethren, to lift up my cry with yours, should we believe lies, and propagate deceits, and avert from our people the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit.—And if there be a class of men, upon whom the fiercest malignity of the damned will be turned, and upon whose heads universal imprecations will mingle with the wrath of the Lamb, it will doubtless, my brethren, be ourselves; if, blind guides, we lead to perdition our deluded hearers."‡

Taken in connexion with what precedes, the meaning of this paragraph, we suppose, is as clear as if it were stated in express terms, that the fate here described will be that of all preachers, who disbelieve the doctrines which its author regards as fundamental; and that all their hearers are treading

* Sermon delivered in Park Street Church, Boston, at the Ordination of Mr. S. E. Dwight and others. By Lyman Beecher, A. M. Pastor of a Church of Christ in Litchfield, Connecticut. p. 26.

† *Ibid.* p. 38.

Ibid. pp. 40, 42.

with them the path to perdition. But perhaps it will be said, that what is here implied may be the honest conviction of the writer; and in that case, it becomes his duty to express it. We have, however, a further question to ask. Of what nature is this conviction, and how was it produced? Is it the conviction of his passions, his prejudices, his party zeal, his bitterness of spirit? Or was it, in fact, produced by the cool and unbiassed exercise of the understanding? If none of the motives operated, which we have just mentioned, it must have been, one would think, by a most painful and reluctant effort of mind, that he arrived at these conclusions. If we could perceive in any writer that he had been forced upon them by some irresistible error of reasoning, and that he had approached them with all that horror and dismay, which they are adapted to produce in a mind not thoroughly perverted by its miserable theology; we should indeed pity and pardon the weakness and the misfortune of that man. But such denunciations as we have quoted are no new thing. Since the time when the first corruptions of religion were introduced among Christians, they have been used by the violent of every sect; and have been continually heard clashing against each other, in that mutual hostility by which the Christian name has been disgraced. Does the preacher whom we have quoted, and they who think, and feel, and write like him, venture to believe, that among all those who have employed such language, their sect is the only one fairly entitled to its use? We now know what was the true character of those men, who, in past times, made such pretensions, and uttered such anathemas, as we hear at the present day. With regard to them, the delusion has past away; and they appear what they really were. If we would not have experience always in its infancy, it is time for us to recollect and apply our knowledge, to judge of what is from what has been; and to estimate those, who are denouncing and reviling their fellow Christians, in the same manner as we estimate those who were heretofore guilty of the same crimes.

It is a melancholy truth, which every chapter of ecclesiastical history may teach us, that the most contemptible vanity, and passions much worse than vanity, may shelter themselves under the name of religion. A few men, certainly not very distinguished for those qualities which usually command respect or esteem, come forward, and tell us in effect, that they and those who hold their creed, have engrossed all the religion, and all the real moral excellence in the world? and in vindicating their pretensions, they defame the living and insult the dead. Let us consider whose monuments, those men, whom we have now brought before the public, would deface and

overturn, if it were in their power? whose ashes they would scatter to the winds? If we were to select from the whole number of uninspired men, we know of none whom, for a union of the most comprehensive reach of intellect, of purity of life, and of sincere regard for religion, we should place before Locke and Newton. But Locke and Newton were Unitarians; and Locke was, in his day, assailed with as much animosity, and in language as coarse and assuming, as are at the present day, directed against the Unitarians of our country. There are no men who have brought more learning, more acuteness, or more true piety to the study of the scriptures than Grotius and Le Clerc. But the feelings of Grotius and Le Clerc were as different from those of the men on whose writings we have remarked, as light from darkness, as the spirit of a Christian from that of the most narrow-minded and intemperate bigotry. What more able and faithful defenders of Christianity have there been than Lardner and Paley? But Lardner was a Unitarian, and Paley, we suspect, our opponents will hardly allow to have been a Christian. We might go on to add many other names of those who have been guides and examples of mankind. And who are the men, who assume the privilege of dispensing reproach and denunciation? Upon what qualities of character do they found their claim thus to judge their brethren;—if they will allow us to lower them to that sort of equality which this name implies?

In regard to the portion of reproach which has fallen to our share, we cannot accuse ourselves, and no one, we think will accuse us of having been too sensible to these attacks. We fear, on the other hand, that we have been too indifferent; that we have regarded them too much as a mere personal concern; and have considered too little their pernicious effects upon the moral and religious character of the community. We may be secure from the fire that has been kindled; but we ought to recollect that wherever it may burn, it will consume the best feelings of men, all that endears us to each other, and will have nothing but an unfruitful waste where only weeds will flourish. In proportion as such writings as we have been considering leave any influence, those sober, honest and manly virtues by which our land has been distinguished, and that quiet and sincere piety which has exerted its blessed influence over so many minds, will disappear; and we shall find in their stead spiritual pride and religious vanity, all the uncharitable, and bitter passions of religious animosity, and all the vices which such dispositions will naturally produce. When calumnies and denunciations, like those we have quoted, begin to be regarded by the better part of society without strong reprobation,

tion; it will be too late to say, that they have not had some effect in deteriorating the moral feelings of the community. Men, honoured with the confidence and attachment of those with whom they are connected, are attacked as destitute of common honesty, as among the vilest and most pernicious members of society, as doing infinite and irreparable injury to all around them. If we look upon such attacks with indifference; if we become accustomed to them as mere matters of course; if we think of them only as indicating a certain violence of temper, and want of manners, in those by whom they are made; if we turn them off with a sneer or a laugh, there is danger that we shall begin to think lightly of every sort of calumny, that our moral sensibility will be blunted, and that our notions of right and wrong will grow confused.

It cannot be disguised, that the true ground of that warfare which has been carried on against a large proportion of Christians in our country, is that they reject certain doctrines, which they believe to be without any foundation in Scripture, or rather, doctrines which they believe to contradict its plain meaning. Whatever gross charges may have been brought, not immediately relating to this topic, yet every one knows that this is the real cause of all the hostility that has been manifested. The direct tendency therefore of such writings as we have noticed, is to set up a standard of moral goodness which is utterly false, and to make something else a substitute for true religion and virtue. This substitute is what is denominated orthodoxy. In proportion as a man is orthodox, he has all real moral excellence. If he be a heretic—no matter what fair appearances there may be—he is wholly destitute of it. The orthodox man is to be looked up to with respect; for he belongs to the small party of true believers. As to the heretic,—take care that you do not bid him, God speed; or you will break an express commandment. He is to be ranked with infidels and outcasts. It is unnecessary to say, that these distinctions often run quite counter to those sentiments respecting individuals, which are founded upon our natural and commonly received notions of right and wrong, of what does and what does not constitute moral goodness. If such doctrines prevail, we shall see among us, what has often been seen in other ages of the church, and in other countries, orthodoxy enough without religion or morality, Christians, who will appear to have received a new commandment, *to hate one another*, and an abundance of saints and religionists without the common virtues of men. The same spirit, which has elsewhere and in other

times produced these effects, has been actively at work among us.

But the indirect may be almost as mischievous as the direct influence of such writings. There is danger with regard to men, little disposed to become intemperate religionists, that they may be led to believe, that the temper and character which these writings exhibit have really some connexion with Christianity, and are such as our religion is adapted to produce. Their authors are pertinaciously insisting that they, and those who think and feel as they do, are the only true Christians; and that a very large proportion of all the most enlightened men, who have embraced our religion with sincere conviction, and endeavored to conform their lives to its spirit, have been in fact its worst enemies; men, who, to quote a common perversion of Scripture, have denied the Lord who bought them. The best disposed can hardly prevent their minds from being in some degree affected by what is continually repeated; and we fear that those, who are not very friendly to Christianity, will be ready enough to take advantage of such misstatements. There is danger that the men of whom we speak will write and talk about religion, till they in some degree associate with the subject itself, the disgust which their manner of treating it is adapted to produce. There have been at all times those who have pretended to be the exclusive friends of Christianity; and who, to manifest their zeal in her cause, have principally employed themselves in driving away from her service, by violence, or scoffs, or outcries, all those who would not acknowledge their claim to this distinction. Such religionists as these have done more injury and discredit to our faith; they have done more to impede its reception, and counteract its influence, than we can well estimate. True religion produces high thoughts, and enlarged conceptions, and noble desires. It infuses into man a new principle of life, and gives him the spirit of an immortal. It is the parent of all that is most liberal, and generous, and honorable. But what is *that*, which produces the character discovered in such writings as those on which we have remarked.

But we believe, and we are happy to believe, that some effects have resulted from these writings which were not intended. There has been, we think, a reaction against them of the good sense, and good feelings of the community. A large proportion of those who may differ from us much upon other topics, will, we believe, agree with us in this, that the religion which is *first pure, then peaceable*, was given for quite other ends than to nourish spiritual pride and mutual animosity among

its professors. The great body of our countrymen in this part of our land have too much plain good sense, and native shrewdness, too much honesty and real religion, to be easily manufactured into fanatics and unprincipled sectarians. To the great majority of those who may differ from us in their views of the doctrines of religion, we think we may appeal with confidence, respecting the unfairness and immorality of the mode of warfare which has been adopted. We beg them not to suffer such writings as we have noticed to have any influence upon their minds. We ask it for our own sakes, and for theirs. For ourselves, as an act of common justice. For their sakes, because the tendency of such writings is to disturb the peace of the community ; to alienate man from man,—Christian from Christian ; and to produce some of the worst passions by which the human character is deformed. If our doctrines be regarded as false, let them be attacked by fair argument. We will not shrink from it ; but if we continue to think them true, we will defend them as we can ; and, we trust, without losing our good will toward those by whom they are assailed. If, in the eagerness of controversy, some expressions should pass the bounds of decorum, we will not complain, and we hope we should not retaliate. But let our characters be spared. We are not infidels. We are Christians, with the most sincere conviction of the truth of our religion ; and with a deep sense of its inestimable value. We do not deny the Lord who bought us. We acknowledge Jesus Christ as our guide, instructor, and master, as the Saviour of the world from sin and error ; we have no stronger desire than to be found among his faithful followers ; to receive all the doctrines which he taught, and to obey all the precepts which he gave. We do not treat the Scriptures with irreverence. We may repeat again, what has already been said a hundred times, that we regard the Scriptures as the only rule of a Christian's faith, in opposition to all the systems of error, which have been the work of human folly and human ingenuity labouring together. We believe that the doctrines which we hold, are most fully and most explicitly declared in the Scriptures ; and it is therefore that we hold them with so firm a conviction. We do not separate religion from morality, and teach men to rest content in mere worldly virtue. We teach that they are inseparable ; that the same principles and affections, in their different operations, produce love to God, and love to man. That morality without religion is deprived of its principle of life, and that religion without morality is religion only in name. We teach, that Christian faith is the only source of Christian purity and of Christian charity ; and

that *he, who would overcome the world, must believe that Jesus is the Son of God.* We are not hypocrites, nor are we indifferent about what we believe the truth. We are ready to use earnestly every fair and honourable means for its promotion. We are ready to devote to this object our time, our talents, all that we can offer; to encounter defamation and reproach, and to make, if need be, the sacrifice of a fair reputation.

We return for a moment to the sermon, of which we have taken notice in the commencement of this article. We should be doing, we conceive, not a little injustice to the citizens of our metropolis, if we were to imagine for a moment, that the circumstances attending its publication would have any effect to check that spirit of liberality, by which they have been so honourably distinguished. We should do injustice also, we believe, to the inhabitants of St. John's, if we did not suppose that they would regard this sermon with stronger reprobation, than any one among us has thought it worth while to express.—We hope and we trust that our fellow-citizens will always retain the character which they have established, for the disinterested employment of wealth in private charity, and to promote objects of public utility. On this subject we may be permitted to add a word or two before we conclude. Religious knowledge, literature, and science must look to the liberal among us for the means of their advancement. But it is necessary to exercise not only liberality, but judgment. Without the latter, he who gives his money, as well as he who devotes his time and talents, with the intention of serving his fellow-men, may entirely fail of his purpose. Inconsiderate and ill-directed liberality often produces almost unmingled evil. In our charity to the poor we may be giving to their vices, and not to their necessities. In contributing to purposes, called religious, we may be promoting error and not truth. Nay, a man may give his money to what is called a religious object, and do no more service to the community, than if he were to contribute towards erecting a distillery, for the purpose of supplying the poor with ardent spirits, gratis. But from well directed liberality, we may look for the best and happiest effects. From the union of this with the exertions of piety, talents, and learning, we may hope to see just and honourable notions of our religion generally prevailing, and producing all those consequences which are their natural result.

ARTICLE V.

An Alphabetical Explication of some terms and phrases, which occur in Scripture, in hymns and psalms, and other books of devotion; intended to promote the profit and pleasure of those who use them. By the late Rev. NEWCOME CAPPE. Boston, 1818. Printed by Joseph T. Buckingham. pp. 21.

Is not religion something simple, level to ordinary capacities, and intelligible by the unlearned? Is it not a record "made plain upon tables, so that he may run who readeth it?" Is it not "a high way, in which the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err?" Is it not a gospel for the poor, and therefore necessary to be clear and explicit? Is it not addressed to the illiterate who have not the capacity, and to the busy who have not the leisure, to engage in remote researches? Is it not practical? and is not its appeal direct and distinct to the affections and consciences of men? Where, then, is the need of laboured explications, or of any displays of acuteness or learning? Truly, if the bible is not to be understood without all the dictionaries, and notes, and commentaries, that are employed in its behalf, it might almost as well be in the hands of the priests again: for it has no suitableness to the wants and opportunities of those whom it is to instruct.

This representation is partly true, and partly erroneous. If we mean by religion a rule of life and a ground of hope, it is certainly most plain. There is no obscurity, no difficulty. The scriptures set in the strongest possible light the perfections of the Deity; the moral dangers and resources of man; what we must do, and what we may expect;—whatever, in other words, is *essential* to our religious knowledge, obedience, and faith. They do not teach more evidently that there is a God, than they do that virtue is his service, and a happy immortality "the recompense of its reward." What it is to be virtuous they leave no opportunity for mistaking. The will of God is as manifest to the humblest in condition, and the most limited in education and privileges, as it is to the most distinguished, intellectual, and learned.—But if we mean by religion whatever is contained in the writings of the Old and New Testaments, we must instantly perceive that it is by no means simple, nor easy to be thoroughly understood. This name is, indeed, improperly used in such an application. Those writings are historical of events connected with religion, or devout exercises, or religious documents: they contain the materials of our belief,

and are the authority, to which we refer and in which we rest. But they are not religion itself. They are in many places difficult and perplexing; but so are not the leading truths, which they unfold and enforce. They are obscure in many places; but not so are Christian morality and the Christian promises. They may suggest doubts and speculations; but all that is vital to religion is plain enough. They may be, and very often are misunderstood; but an upright conscience, and a humble faith, can never fall into dangerous error. The Bible is *a book*; therefore to be interpreted by the same principles as other compositions:—a miscellaneous book; therefore requiring an unusual share of discrimination:—a translated book; therefore needing the aids of human learning, and an acquaintance with other tongues:—a most ancient book; and consequently demanding a knowledge of antiquity, and familiarity with manners, modes of thinking, forms of expression, very different from those of our own country and age. Language itself is imperfect and ambiguous: even our own, and on common affairs. Controversial writers, in the same, and that their native tongue, are perpetually mistaking each other, and half their disputes are merely verbal. Think then how many difficulties must arise here; when the language is foreign, very peculiar, and no longer spoken:—when it comes from a strange people amidst strange institutions:—when it is employed often on topics that are local, involving circumstances but partially transmitted to us; and often on controversies that have ceased and are forgotten:—when it now hides its meaning in allegory, and now rises to the boldest flights of poetical rapture. Beside all this, the Bible has come down to us through the midst of conflicting sects, through ages of ignorance and superstition, through the hands of system-makers. It is so prescribed to us from infancy what meaning we are to affix to its expressions; every word and phrase of it has become so appropriated; that we scarcely know how to exercise our reason on the subject; scarcely know how we should have interpreted the scriptures, had no human creeds and confessions condescended to direct us how we *must*. It is a great source of error, that we annex to the words of holy writ the meaning that early habit, and not personal inquiry, has led us to apply to them. This is in effect to choose for our religious teachers, in a greater or less extent, and with more or less directness, the disputants of the most benighted times, that the gospel has ever looked upon. There is a large list of terms, which Christians most commonly misunderstand, from having heard them always used in some peculiar acceptation, and in connexion with certain theological opinions. Thus, “to

be saved," conveys to us instantly the idea of being received to heaven after death; "to be condemned," to be doomed to eternal punishment: though this is far from being the usual import of those expressions. When we hear of "the day of judgment," our fancy kindles at the thought of a simultaneous resurrection, and assembled worlds, but there are several passages, in which it cannot mean this; and our Swedenborgian brethren are not the only Christians, who do not believe that it ever does.

We think it must be obvious to all, that a philological, not a party explication, of the words that have been the most subject to abuses, must be of great service in assisting men to an intelligent use of the sacred Scriptures: for it is those abuses, that are the fountain head of sectarian extravagance. The sermon of the excellent Paley "on caution in the use of Scripture language," has done, we doubt not, great good; although confined to a few popular religious phrases. The posthumous little work of Mr. Cappe, which has given occasion to the preceding remarks, tends to the same end, though entirely different in plan and form. It aims at nothing but to give, in words as plain and few as possible, the different significations, belonging to those expressions, which are important, and of frequent occurrence in the bible and religious writings drawn from it. Every thing from the pen of so enlightened and devout a man deserves respect: we have only to regret that his list is no larger, and that he has not been more full on those words, of which he has found occasion to take notice. As a short manual for those, who would read "with the spirit and with the understanding," we cannot but think it may be of considerable utility. We will offer but two or three short extracts, and close this article.

"ATONEMENT. Removal of that, by which incapacity or disqualification for the service of God has been contracted: reconciliation with God: declaration of it: sanctification: consecration to God, or to his service."

"TO COME, TO COME FROM GOD, TO COME INTO THE WORLD. These phrases, in scripture, frequently refer to the mission of a prophet, and are to be interpreted of his assuming his public character, coming forth in the name of God to exercise his ministry in the world, and to discharge the commission with which he is invested." "*To come down from heaven*, figuratively, to be given by God, to be sent from God, by him authorized, and furnished for the errand."

"HELL. The grave; death; the state of the dead; the unseen world; the place or state of those, upon whom a sentence of final condemnation has been passed and executed; sometimes *temporal* ruin and destruction; deep distress and trouble of this present life."

"SALVATION. Deliverance; preservation; in the language of Scripture it often signifies deliverance of Jews and Heathens from the disadvantages of the dispensations under which they lived: from the burdens of the Mosaic law; from superstition, idolatry, ignorance, sin, fear, doubt; by

the Gospel of Christ. It sometimes signifies God the author of salvation ; Christ the minister of salvation ; the gospel the instrument of salvation. See REDEMPTION."

"SIN. *To be made sin* : to be judicially condemned, whether legally and righteously or not ; to be treated as a sinner ; to be hardly thought of ; to be accused unjustly ; to be singularly afflicted ; to suffer by the hand of the magistrate, by the unkind judgment of other men, or by the deed of providence."

Several interpretations are here given to one word : but the intelligent reader will seldom, if ever, be left in doubt which he should apply to the several passages which need the assistance of the "Explication."

The pamphlet of which we are speaking contains but twenty-one pages. Within such narrow limits much must be omitted, and nothing can be dwelt upon. Conciseness and simplicity, however, are rarely carried to faults ; and the very rudiments of rational interpretation are much wanted among us.

ARTICLE VI.

A practical view of Christian Education in its earliest stages. By T. BABINGTON, Esq. Member of the British Parliament. First American from the third London edition. To which are added translations of the Latin sentences and notes. Boston : Cummings & Hilliard. 1818.

OF the importance of the subject, to which this little work invites us, there can exist no reasonable doubt. It is inseparably connected with the best hopes and prospects of society ; and every attempt to illustrate or recommend it is entitled to respect. Indeed it may be regarded as a leading feature in the moral history of the present day, that this subject has excited so much attention. It has called forth some of the finest powers and purest feelings in its cause. In nothing has female talent been more happily exerted ; and to the labours of Mrs. Hamilton, and More, and Edgeworth, we should in justice ascribe the important changes, which have taken place since the commencement of this century, and which may be particularly seen in the simplicity, practical good sense, and freedom from vulgar errors, with which the great subject of education is now generally regarded, and its acknowledged principles applied.

The author of this work is well known in the political and religious world ; having frequently distinguished himself in the British Parliament as the advocate of freedom and humanity.

The experience he has enjoyed in the work of education, even more than the honourable station he fills, gives him a right to be heard ; and much of what he has offered will approve itself, we doubt not, to serious and reflecting minds. We can cordially concur with him in all his convictions of the paramount importance of religion in education, though we should be unable to follow him in some of his speculative views. He thus exposes his ideas as to the prevailing indifference of parents on this subject, contrasted with their zeal and anxiety to secure the temporal advantage of their children.

“Is a son intended for a learned profession ? He is sent to school. The father is earnest that the master should ground him well in grammar, give him a taste for classical literature, and call forth his powers in composition. A college and tutor are selected with anxious care to promote his intellectual improvement. An earnest solicitude is felt, that he should become a sound and elegant scholar ; and inquiring friends are told what progress he makes in his pursuits. Again, suppose, that a more humble walk of life is chosen by the parent, and that the boy is to be a tradesman ; with what care does he select a master, who perfectly understands his business, and will be likely to make the boy thoroughly acquainted with it ? But how seldom are their spiritual interests the object of equal solicitude ! Are masters chosen with the same care for the promotion of these interests ? In fixing on schools and colleges for boys destined to the higher professions, and on masters and counting houses for those, who are to move in a more humble line, is it a matter of prime consideration to select those, which are known to be favourable to true religion ?” p. 15.

And after an ample illustration of the same subject, he asks,

“Can we consult our experience on these points without exclaiming—What prudent care in human things ! what negligence in divine ! The result of such negligence may be easily anticipated, and is lamentably apparent in the character and habits of our young Men.” p. 18.

Now there is no one, who thinks seriously upon the subject of religion, but will cordially subscribe to these sentiments, as applied to simple uncorrupt christianity, and will lament with him the great inattention that prevails. Let religion in its purity and beauty be made the very basis of education. Let its plain, its alluring, its undisputed truths be continually impressed, as entering essentially into all our hopes of present, as well as of future usefulness and happiness ; and let their influence constantly accompany and sanctify the intellectual progress. But there is infinite danger from attempting to indoctrinate the youthful, and still more the infant mind, in the peculiarities of a sect. It is rendering that disgusting, which should appear, as it indeed is, most lovely and attractive : and it is well if, in the end, it do

not create a disrelish for every thing connected with religion itself.

It seems to us, that there can be scarcely a greater abuse in education, than to make it the instrument of a sectarian theology. Here, if any where, controversy is out of place. It impedes the native growth and expansion of the powers ; it makes religion a prejudice instead of a principle ; calls to its aid our passions and our ignorance, when its peculiar province is to enlighten the one and subdue the other ; or else, by a re-action, produced partly by impatience of constraint and partly by disgust at a revolting system, it drives the pupil to the miserable refuge of infidelity. These remarks will not be thought misplaced by any, who have considered the history of those academic institutions, where literary and intellectual progress have been made subordinate to the views of a party.

In the second chapter the author recommends a very early attention to the temper and habits of children, and exposes what he justly deems the error of delay or neglect. His general views on this subject seem to us very judicious, though they borrow something of their complexion from the system, with which the mind and pen of the writer seem strongly tinged. We quote the following.

“In a few weeks after its birth a child’s reason begins to dawn ; and with the first dawn of reason ought to commence the moral culture, which may be best suited to counteract the evils of its nature. Let me appeal to every mother, who delights to view her infant, as it lies in her arms, whether it does not soon begin to read the human face divine, to recognize her smile, and to show itself sensible of her affection in the little arts she employs to entertain it. Does it not in no long time return that smile, and repay her maternal caresses with looks and motions, so expressive, that she cannot mistake their import ? She will not doubt then the importance of fostering in its bosom those benevolent sympathies which delight her, by banishing from her nursery whatever is likely to contradict them.”

“But parental cares soon extend. In a short time, impatience and selfishness show themselves in a child, and are accompanied by fretfulness, jealousy, anger and envy. At so early a period does innate corruption display its powers, and call for the restraining hand of a parent ! But how are these evils to be counteracted at an age, when both the body and mind are so tender, and neither arguments nor explanations can be understood ? Undoubtedly great delicacy of treatment is required. The character of the child must be studied, and if possible such corrections must be applied as will not deeply wound its feelings. It is surprising what female ingenuity, quickened by maternal tenderness, will achieve in this way.” pp.32.33.

And after adducing some particular examples, he proceeds with the following admirable sentiments, which are so just and interesting, that we feel unwilling, as we are compelled, to abridge.

"But how, some parents may ask, how can this be effected at so tender an age? It seems to us impossible. Believe me, much may be done with very young children, by placing gradually before them with cheerfulness and affection, and in a spirit suited to the occasion, religious truths, associated as much as may be with images pleasing to their minds. These may be so set forth and brought home to the feelings by little and simple illustrations, that while the tender mind is imbued with the first rudiments of religious knowledge, reverence and affection for divine things, if God smile upon the endeavour, shall be excited in the heart. *But special care must be taken not to give fatiguing lectures, nor to make too powerful calls on the feelings.* 'Here a little and there a little' must be a parent's motto in conveying instruction at this age; and for that little, the lessons must be chosen, when the child is most likely to lend a willing ear; and the subject must always be dropped, before it becomes tiresome. Very short and simple stories from Holy Writ may be employed with great advantage. But in conveying instruction, it is a most important point for the parent always to have in mind, that far more may be done by exciting the sympathy of the child, than by appealing to its reason. Things indeed should always be presented to it in the garb of truth and good sense; but unless its feelings are in unison with its convictions, it may be perfectly persuaded of truths without being influenced by them in practice. And how are the appropriate feelings to be excited in its bosom? Chiefly by the feelings of the parent being in unison with the subject on which he speaks. Is he dwelling on the greatness of God, or on his all seeing eye, or on his eternity, or on his glory? Let his own heart harmonize with his lofty theme, and probably the right strings in that of his child will vibrate. Is he describing the divine love and tenderness, and mercy, especially as exemplified in Jesus Christ? If his own feelings are impressed by the picture he presents, those of his child are not likely to be altogether unmoved. But who can be so absurd as to hope, that when religious truths are taught as a school-master teaches the grammar, good impressions will be made on the heart? Do we see in fact, that when the Catechism is so taught, any such impression is made? Step into a village school, when that compendium is learnt merely as a task, and you will find the children as little affected by its truths (even if they understand it) as they are by the lessons in their spelling book. One would almost think that they conceived it pointed out the high privileges and the sacred duties of the inhabitants of the moon, and that they had nothing to do with it, but to get it by heart. Few if any parents, it is hoped, who make religion a branch of education, proceed in a way so utterly irrational, as the generality of village schoolmasters in teaching the catechism; but, in whatever degree they approach to the village school system, in that degree, must they look for a similar result." p. 35.

The third chapter contains general recommendations to guard parents against some evils, not uncommon in families. They are for the most part characterised by great judgment and good sense; and obviously the result of experience. We were particularly pleased with the last, on the importance of parents being much with their children, and attentively studying their characters.

"The mother is much more with her children than the father, but generally, I think, not so much as she ought to be. This is the more to be lamented, because women are admirably fitted for training their offspring in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They have a remarkably quick

insight into character; and a warmth of affection, a tenderness and a delicacy, which win the affection of others, and enable them to correct faults without giving offence, and to present christian principles and virtues to their children in their most amiable form. I believe there has seldom been a man, that has not in after life looked back on her instructions and example with reverence and delight.—Every hour which a christian mother spends with her children has balm on its wings. She contrives to make even their pastimes a moral lesson; and though she cannot (and it is not desirable that she should) make their regular lessons a pastime, yet she adapts them well to the abilities of her scholars, accommodates them well to times and circumstances, and divests them of whatever is oppressive and revolting. To mix the pleasant with the useful is at least as important in education as in poetry; but good mothers far exceed good poets in that art. Surely, then, a mother should be jealous of every thing, which keeps her from the bosom of her family; a sphere, in which she is so gifted to shine, and to be a blessing to those most dear to her. How sad is it, when she throws away this pure gold for mere dross, by giving up those hours to an excess of visiting and company, which ought to be spent among her children!" p. 62.

We seriously recommend this to the attention of those mothers, who allow themselves to forget their highest and noblest duties in unnecessary and superfluous attention to domestic concerns, or amidst the gayeties of fashionable amusements. The habitual presence, and unseen, but certain, influence of a mother, is of inestimable importance on the minds and hearts of her children. We have witnessed and admired it in some of its choicest and holiest influences. It is like the small rain upon the tender herb.

The extracts, we have already made, will be sufficient to indicate the nature and spirit of the work, and will supersede the necessity of a more minute description of its merits. Of its style and literary execution we forbear to speak, except to remark, that these were clearly a very subordinate object in the mind of the writer. We just add, that among the topics of the following chapter, we noticed with pleasure some remarks on the effect of the *personal character of parents*, on the *means for the support of parental authority and influence*, and particularly on the *difficult and disputed subject of emulation*, which, as distinguished from the simple desire of excellence, and involving the wish to surpass others, he condemns as an unhal- lowed principle of action; as scarcely, if at all, to be disjoined from jealousy and envy, from pride and contention, incompatible with loving our neighbour as ourselves, and a principle of such potency as to be likely to engross the mind and turn it from the motives, which it should be the great business of education to cherish and render predominant.—We readily agree with the author, that the principle of emulation is questionable and dangerous; that its natural tendency is to call into exercise our

most selfish feelings, and that through disappointed ambition it is not seldom a source of misery. But it is difficult in the course of *intellectual*, much more we conceive than in that of *moral* education, to substitute an equivalent; or to say, by what efficient motives boys of the same standing, in pursuit of the same studies, and desirous of the same honours, shall be quickened to their exertions without somewhat, at least, of that mutual comparison and competition, which are inseparable from the principle of emulation.

There is however one sentiment, which has been strongly impressed upon us from the perusal of this work, and that is, the *importance of a simple, affectionate, and encouraging view of religion* to the work of education; in other words, of a strict adherence to the simplicity and tenderness, that pervade the gospel. We do not mean, that our author has exhibited a strong contrast to this, for his good sense and observation, and still more his paternal feelings, evidently correct and soften what in less kind and skilful hands would have been repulsive. But notwithstanding this, we see the influences of a mistaken theology; something of that obscurity and much of that gloom, which belong to the doctrines he has espoused, and which render the system, which contains them, in our apprehension, unsuited to conduct the instruction of the infant mind. In the first place, it seems to us of infinite importance, that the character and government of God should be exhibited to the understanding of a child in the simplest and most alluring manner; that nothing should be offered to obscure the grand idea of his unity, and still less of his perfect, impartial goodness. For it must be remembered, that none of the explanations, by which contradictions may be reconciled to a theologian, can be comprehended by the young pupil; and that what is difficult or obscure to others, must be utter darkness and confusion to him. When therefore Mr. Babington tells us, (page 91) that "children must not be puzzled in religion—that we must avoid passages, that have a direct bearing upon disputed points," we most cordially concur. But when he adds, as he does in the next sentence, that "the great aim should be to make by divine aid their heavenly Father and their sanctifier, but ABOVE ALL *their Saviour and his Gospel*, the object of their reverence and their affections,"—it seems to us, he is falling into the very error, he is desirous to guard. We stay not here to discuss the question of the equality of the Son with the Godhead; but we ask, whether, under any system of faith, there can be the least truth or propriety in exhibiting our Saviour (and that in his mediatorial, consequently his subordinate character) as an object of reverence ABOVE our "heav-

only Father." The only effect of such instruction upon the mind of a child, that reflects at all, must be to darken and confound. And it seems to us, that the extreme difficulty, rather we should say the impossibility, of giving *under this system*, at that important age, any clear or satisfactory views as to the object of worship, affords in itself no slight *previous* indication, that it cannot be a part of that Gospel, one grand end of which is to instruct the ignorant, and to guide the young to God. How much more simple, how much more affecting, the instruction of our Saviour himself—"This is life eternal: to know THEE the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

Neither can we regard the doctrine of inherent, *total depravity*, to which frequent reference is made in this work, as in any view a proper principle in a system of education. Not only because in our apprehension it is unsupported by scripture, but because even supposing its truth, it can never on this subject be applied to any useful practical purpose. For let a parent's speculative views be what they may, and his professions of them sincere as they ought, we are persuaded that he never will, that he never can, look upon his infant child as a being totally depraved; or commence his work of instruction, as if he had nothing to do but to root out corruption. This dogma might enter into his theological creed, and darken his views of mankind in general; but the common sensibilities of his nature would be perpetually opposing its influence within the circle of his family. With something less of theoretic devotion to a system, he might admit,—what personal experience and observation no less than the word of God most clearly teach,—the great deceitfulness of the human heart, the wayward propensities of our nature to sin, and the infinite danger, to which virtue is exposed from the maxims, habits, and examples of an evil world: and convictions, like these, scriptural and rational as they are, would be more than sufficient to supply the necessary rules and cautions; and would excite to parental vigilance with far happier effect, than the gloomy, discouraging sentiment, which our author supposes.

For ourselves we look upon religious education as eminently a means of grace; one of the earliest, most important and efficacious ordinances of heaven, to form, direct and elevate human character. Its principles therefore should be simple and easily understood, the dictates of reason and experience, and above all, the clear instructions of God's word. They should exhibit such views of the Deity as are most encouraging and attractive. Nor will it be difficult at that susceptible age, to impress the most important truths of religion. The child can early be taught

his relation to and dependence upon his heavenly Father. He can soon learn to reverence and love Him as the great Being, who forms, sustains, and blesses all; who brought him into life, who rocked the cradle of his infancy, and to whom he owes his health, and friends, and every thing he enjoys. By very simple, yet touching instruction he can be taught, that all, which he sees about him, of the glory and beauty of creation in heaven, earth, air, and sea, is the work of God—and thence he will be led to adore.

But we may extend early religious instruction much farther than this; for as Christians we possess a system of religion admirably suited by its simplicity and purity to affect and form the infant mind. When separated from the errors and corruptions of man, with a sublimity and energy all its own, it approves itself at once to the contemplation of the philosopher and to the feelings of a child. Besides the paternal views it opens of the character of God, of his mild and benevolent government, of his unfailing bounty, and of his universal, unintermitted care; besides the awakening and salutary truth it enforces, of his all pervading presence, and of his heart-searching eye, it exhibits in the person and example of Jesus Christ an object peculiarly suited to attract and delight even the youngest mind. And it seems to us, that there is nothing, in which the moral grandeur and sublimity of his character were more apparent, than in its adaptation to the conceptions of children. It would seem, as if he had softened for them the splendour of his perfections, that he might win and engage their hearts. His gentleness, his meekness, his simplicity and truth, his tenderness and love, are precisely the qualities, which render their period of life the most engaging; and by an affectionate and judicious parent may be exhibited with an admirable influence, as the model of their imitation. Here is the grand advantage of Christian education, that in its perfect morality it prescribes no precept, without furnishing at the same time a most alluring example.

But we do not mean to enlarge. We hope that the republication of this little work may be useful in exciting increased attention to one of the most important of all objects. There are parents, who anxiously think of every thing for their children, but how they shall form their characters and prepare them for an immortal life. To such we earnestly recommend the pious and faithful zeal of this exemplary father. He may convince them, that there are considerations, infinitely more valuable than the present comfort and prosperity of their offspring; but they will better learn for themselves in the pages of the New-Testament, the doctrines they must teach, and the pure spirit of that religion, which they must labour to infuse.

ARTICLE VII.

Observations on Penal Jurisprudence and the Reformation of the Criminal code ; with an Appendix, containing the latest Reports of the State Prisons or Penitentiaries of Philadelphia, New-York, and Massachusetts, and other Documents. By WILLIAM ROSCOE, Esq. 8vo. London. 1819.

THE contents of this volume, as they are the result of real philanthropy, address themselves forcibly to all the benevolent, who, to the common compassionate regard for the wretched, unite a willingness to aid, by their individual exertions or influence, all endeavours to relieve the suffering, to reclaim the guilty, or to invigorate generally the moral principle among men. They are particularly suited to awaken a strong interest in those, who have at heart a feeling for the purity and peace, and, if we may so speak, the integrity of our society in its progress to refinement.—It is not confined to the philosopher, to know that, as society advances, crimes multiply faster than virtues; and those who are happiest in the consciousness of the comparatively unsullied character of our society at this day, of our present youthful innocence, are perhaps the saddest as they contemplate the moral changes, that await a manhood of power consolidated and immense, and an old age weakened by wealth and corrupted by luxury.

To *extirpate* moral evil, is among the dreams of the visionary. To apportion with a discriminating regard to the subjects of it, punishment to crime,—by chastisement or restraint to subdue or soften the obduracy of the vicious; by a wholesome discipline to chasten and control the wayward; in short, so to lay the sanctions of the law, that by every form of penal application the delinquent shall feel himself rather drawn to penitence than driven to despair,—is among the noblest aims of the legislator and philanthropist.

The main object of the work before us seems to be in aid of the glorious attempt of Howard—to interest public feeling and enlighten public opinion, by presenting views of the various systems in operation on the European Continent, in England and our own country, and by stating their defects and advantages, to suggest the necessity and means of changing some and improving others. The tendency of all the reasoning in the book (except that upon some isolated questions, such as the abolition of punishment by death, and others, all of too wide a scope to admit of hasty discussion by him or us) is such, to be sure, as discovers a little of the systematizing spirit, and would go to

substitute a Penitentiary for all the forms of punishment, coercion or restraint, as the grand corrective of all crime—from guilt of the deepest die, to delinquencies which fault and folly have barely tinged.

Though our readers may not coincide with all the arguments, however plainly they proceed from a feeling heart and an intelligent mind, yet the facts communicated and considerations offered in this volume to those who would “do good with knowledge,” entitle it to much attention. There are some particular considerations which make it of unusual importance to us on this side the water. Our population is not only swelling beyond parallel, but of the thousands flowing in upon us from under the operation of different and various laws, very many will probably be rightly adjudged to tenant for a time, and crowd our prisons. The question then becomes an important one—How shall their punishment be made productive of good to themselves and the community? Mr. Roscoe labours solely to answer this question. Both his general arguments,—we mean those founded on the nature and effects of punishment,—and his inductive reasoning from the many valuable facts with which his book is stored as to the existing varieties of prison discipline as well as the codes of penal law, unite in support of a Penitentiary as best suited to answer the ends of all punishment. First as respects the individual, to soften the mind and not harden the heart, and secondly as regards the community, to turn the labours of the imprisoned to the public account; and at the same time hold out to the transgressor the opportunity of amendment, and furnish him with motives to reform. We cannot, in a notice which is intended only to invite attention to an important subject, begin with a statement of Mr. Roscoe’s sentiments and doctrines in the several departments of Penal Jurisprudence, and lead our readers after him through the chief prisons of almost every state and metropolis in Europe; giving next a full account of the prisons, prison-discipline, and penal laws of England; then crossing the water, and entering into a minute history of the State Penitentiaries and Prisons in our own country, describing and accounting for their original success and subsequent decline of usefulness; then discussing the best mode of Penitentiary discipline, and closing with a large and full appendix, stored with documents and facts, all going to substantiate the positions and confirm the reasonings of the author. Much less shall we attempt to answer all the arguments (many of which we hold to be exceedingly fallacious and ungrounded) which he has ingeniously enough arrayed to beat down established doctrines, that are at war with his Penitentiary project, and to

establish his point. We shall however enter a little more into a detail of the contents of this book, and notice some of the author's peculiarities of sentiment; and shall give some extracts, which may very probably furnish a better knowledge of the work, than any general statements of ours on the subject of which it treats.

Mr. Roscoe begins with discussing the motives and end of Punishment; and as his whole system hinges on his peculiar sentiments here, which, as expressed, we think, are without sufficient qualification, we shall give what we deem the essence of the doctrine.

"Instead of connecting the ideas of crime and punishment, we ought to place together the ideas of crime and reformation—considering Punishment as only one of the modes for effecting such reformation."

"It requires but a very slight acquaintance either with the principles of human nature, or the history of civil society to be convinced, that punishment, simply and in itself, has never been found a sufficient preservative against the commission of crime. The first impulse of the mind upon the infliction of pain by way of punishment is not contrition, but resentment; a hardening of heart, not only against those who inflict it, but against the rest of the world; and too often, it is to be feared, a resolution to balance the account, as soon as possible, by a repetition of the same, or a commission of a greater offence. Hence, it has been shown by the experience of all ages, that as *punishments have increased in severity, crimes have been multiplied*. It is only by the calm exercise of reason, by removing the inducement, or correcting the disposition to crimes, or by taking a sincere interest in the welfare of the offender, and convincing him, that the evils he experiences are the unavoidable consequences of his own misconduct, and are inflicted upon him for his own good, that we can expect any beneficial effect. Upon the practicability of this is founded the great plan of modern improvement, called the *Penitentiary System*, the advantages of which are every day becoming more apparent, and which, when perfected by experience, cannot fail to produce the most important and happiest results on the moral character and condition of mankind." p. 10.

By the reformation of which he speaks, he means that of the individual criminal—thus laying too entirely out of the idea of punishment, its terrifying effects on all who are not within the immediate grasp of offended Law. Though we are aware that this doctrine of his is occasionally qualified a little in this work,—yet we are forced to confess, and we do it once for all, that the whole tenor of his reasoning, and the effects of his proposed improvements have too *exclusive* a tendency to ameliorate the condition and improve the characters of those, whose guilt has subjected them to punishment, and too remote and weak an influence in the prevention of crime. So long as the fears of men shall be among the prime regulators of action, so long must punishment, if we would not surrender the peace of society, have something more in view than the mere reformation of the offender.

We come to a Chapter, which does not need our praise, and which, if our limits permitted, we would give to our readers entire—on the *Prevention of crime*. This subject is ably discussed. Crimes are rightly attributed to the vicious habits of the age. The prominent are specified. Intoxication is at the head of the list. The second, is the open and unrestrained practice of gaming—originating in the highest classes, and descending, and corrupting as it descends, through all ranks, till it reaches the very children in the streets. The third, is the alarming extent of female profligacy. This enumeration will apply to our own society as forcibly as to the English; and as the establishing a correct sense of moral duty must be at the bottom of every endeavour to prevent crime—the exertions of the benevolent in counteracting these vices will do more toward prevention, than the building of many prisons and penitentiaries.

As we shall not be able to examine very minutely Mr. R's. Penitentiary Plan, we ought in justice to give some of the general principles on which he rests the propriety of its establishment. Objecting, as he does most strenuously, to the specific punishments, of which Montesquieu, Beccaria, Voltaire, and the Abbe Turreil are the most distinguished advocates, he proceeds to lay out the ground for his Penitentiary, by the aid of arguments, strikingly plausible, yet to us not wholly satisfactory. He says.

“When we speak of punishing crimes, we are in danger of being misled by a figure of speech. In fact, we do not punish the *crime*, but the *individual, who commits the crime*; and whatever end the punishment is intended to answer, it must bear a relation to the nature, disposition, and circumstances of such individual. To hang up indiscriminately a certain number of persons, because they have committed a certain act, without any regard to the peculiar circumstances under which such act was committed, or by which every different case is distinguished, or even without any clear idea of the result to be produced, would be the height of folly, if it were not the height of injustice; and with regard to inferior punishments, it must be apparent on the slightest reflection, that the same punishment, applied to different persons, may produce not only a different, but a contrary effect, and that which may be necessary to *reform one*, may only serve to *harden another*. To apply the same punishment to all is therefore a kind of *empiricism* in legislation, which pretends by a certain specific to cure a certain crime, without any reference to the state of the party, on whom the nostrum is to be tried.” p. 76.

“We must inquire into the character, temper, and moral constitution of the individual, and acquaint ourselves with his natural and acquired talents, his habits and his views, in order that we may be enabled to adopt such measures for his improvement, as may be best adapted to the case. If he be *ignorant*, we must *instruct* him; if he be *obstinate and arrogant*, we must *humiliate* him; if he be *indolent*, we must *rouse* him; if he be *desponding*, we must *encourage* him; and this, it is evident, cannot be

accomplished without resorting to different modes of treatment, and the full exercise of those moral and sympathetic endowments, which subsist in a greater or less degree between all human beings, as incident to our common nature." p. 77.

Thus is the fitness of a Penitentiary to be the *sole* instrument of punishment in the hands of the Executive, made out to the satisfaction perhaps of many, who may not have seen human nature under its most hideous forms, nor have looked so attentively into its construction, as to know that the heart may be callous to every thing else, yet alive to the startling denunciations of the Law's awful vengeance.

As the appendix contains a fuller history of the Penitentiaries in our own country, embracing an account not only of their establishment and growth, but of their management and discipline, than the chapter devoted to this subject in the body of the work, we refer our readers to its complete and accurate statements for much valuable information. The Chapters respectively on the penitentiary systems of the Continent, and that of England, we must also pass with a single observation—that the latter contains, among many interesting facts as to the character and discipline of the existing establishments in England, a notice of the able and successful endeavours of Sir Samuel Romilly, to soften some of the severest features of the British penal law, by expunging from its code a number of its most sanguinary statutes; and also, those of Sir William Blackstone, Lord Auckland, and Mr. Howard, in obtaining in 1779 the first legislative encouragement of the Penitentiary plan;—and that the former embraces a general view of the varieties of prison and penitentiary discipline on the continent, and a valuable record of the facts ascertained by the laborious personal examinations of Howard, and other philanthropic travellers. The following is from the account given by the Hon. Henry Gray Bennet, who visited the prisons of Paris in 1814 and 15, to a Committee of the House of Commons. He states

"Though little advance has been made in France towards a penitentiary system, yet the greatest pains seem every where to be taken to keep the prisoners in a state of active and useful labour; and under proper restrictions and regulations, there seems to be no trade, that cannot with safety be received within the walls of a prison; that in the prison of *St. Pelagie*, where persons are confined for small offences, the imprisonment is for various terms, none above ten years. There were three hundred and fifty criminals, varying from all ages, from ten years old to sixty. A general system of work is introduced; there was hardly any one idle; work is found by manufacturers in Paris, and a person is in each workshop, to watch over and instruct the workmen. p. 124."

"In the St. Lazare there were eight hundred and eighty women under sentence. The common crime was domestic theft, and the majority of the prisoners, servants in Paris. The system of correctional police seems to be good. In twenty years, about twelve hundred have been discharged, out of whom about two hundred have again been confined; and many persons, who have been there, are now living rich and respectable at Paris. The prison is inspected daily. Mass is performed once a week on Sundays. No prayers on week days. No religious or moral instruction whatever. A general system of labour prevails throughout the prison. From one hundred to one hundred and thirty, in each work-room under one inspector." p. 126.

"In the Bicetre, (a prison in Paris) six hundred and eighty two persons of all descriptions were confined, four hundred of whom were at work in different trades. Some earned as high as thirty or forty sous a day. The earnings were divided in thirds, as before mentioned. No irons used—but the prison was in general dirty and offensive." p. 127.

Our remarks have so grown under our hands, that we have but little time or room to notice the last, and, in our opinion, decidedly the most able and philosophic chapter of the work—that on the Discipline of a Penitentiary. We wish it were in our power to lay the whole of it before our readers; for it cannot well be abridged. His prominent rules are, that a Penitentiary should never be a place of confinement for the untried; that it should not be *a goal*; that a person who had once been discharged should never be again received; that corporal punishment should not be resorted to, but measures more consistent with humane feelings and Christian principles be adopted, to reclaim the offender and restore him to society;—that a penitentiary should be in the community, what the lungs are to the human body, an organ for purifying the circulation, and returning it in a healthy state to perform its office in the general mass; that society should be as far as possible prohibited, and each criminal be confined, by night at least, alone—reform must come from reflection, and solitude will force reflection; that reasonable relaxation should be allowed; and, with regard to the application of motives to voluntary labour—it is as justly as eloquently remarked, "It is not perhaps too much to say, that the greatest cruelty, that can be exercised upon an individual, is to separate his labour from his hope; to compel him to strike a certain number of strokes, but to deprive him of the sentiment that should invigorate them. Let the reader reflect upon this, and consider what is the curse of slavery." He adds, that for this reason, whatever the criminal obtains should be applied to his entire profit and advantage; that these profits however should be subject to deductions for his maintenance, and restitution to the injured; and that a continuance of good behaviour should be the ground of a recommendation to

the proper authority for a discharge. The whole object is concisely stated in the following passage.

“Upon the whole it seems indispensably necessary, in order that Penitentiary establishments should succeed to their full extent, that the principle, upon which they are founded, should pervade, and be continually manifested through the whole establishment. That principle is *Benevolence*, exerting itself in promoting the real and permanent welfare of the individuals there confined. Unless this object be fully understood and strictly adhered to, it will be in vain to expect any favourable result. *The reformation of the criminal should be the motive, the object, and the measure of all our exertions.* Every kind of corporal punishment should be strictly prohibited. Solitary confinement in cases of extreme obstinacy should alone be allowed; and this has always been found sufficient to soften the most obdurate disposition. Every prisoner should be preserved, as far as possible, from contamination, by separate confinement at night, and by a diligent superintendence, while pursuing his avocations, whether alone or in company, by day. When he labours, it should be wholly for his own profit, subject to such out-goings *for his maintenance*, and other *just and reasonable objects, as may be defined.* Independence of character and ability to provide for himself, are among the chief objects of his attainment, and these can never be acquired unless he be encouraged *to trust to his own efforts*, excited *to feel his own interest.* Cleanliness of person should be most strongly recommended, and rigidly enforced, not only as essential to health and comfort, but as conducive to *moral order, rectitude, and self-respect.* Every disposition to improvement should be encouraged by the expectation, that a diligent perseverance in industry, obedience, and propriety of conduct, will be rewarded by a diminution of the term of imprisonment. A strict attention to avoid all profane, indecent, and offensive expressions, is indispensably requisite, and even reserve, and silence, and quiet, will occasionally prove great restorators; but above all, every effort should be made to raise their minds to a due sense of their situation and destiny, as *rational and immortal beings*; and (in the impressive language of a friend) ‘to substitute the *godly fear of doing wrong*, for the *slavish fear of punishment.*’ The happy consequences that have attended the humane and persevering endeavours of Mrs. Fry, have demonstrated what may be accomplished, in the most hopeless cases, by kindness, good sense, and a sincere sympathy in the wants and sufferings of others. Such an example cannot fail to diffuse itself, and call forth followers in every part of the Kingdom; and there is every reason to hope, that the buildings now erecting, or to be erected, for this purpose, will be not only in name, but in fact, PENITENTIARIES.” pp. 171—173.

We have been led imperceptibly along to say more than we intended, though less than we could wish, in our notice of this book. But we conceive that we are well employed in attending, however hastily, to subjects of so great importance to the safety and the virtue of society, as those which are here treated. It is of the first consequence to us as citizens, to know how to protect ourselves against the depredations of the vicious, and as Christians, to ascertain the most probable methods of reclaiming the wicked, and restoring to them the character and

hopes they have lost. The Christian philanthropist will not fail to be interested in all suggestions, and speculations, and plans relating to this subject; while the exertions which have been made, and are now making, especially the late astonishing renovations in Newgate, will convince him that much is possible, though perhaps not all that a warm heart might wish. In this country however, though much is to be done, yet far less is necessary than in the country for whose benefit our author was writing. It was a main design of his work, to operate in relaxing the severity of the English criminal law, whose code, he says, "if executed according to the letter, would be the most sanguinary in the world." We may be grateful to Heaven, that among our distinguished civil blessings, there is little necessity for amendment or change in the Penal Law of our country; and that,—while we are not the less bound, to avail ourselves of all the means, which the benevolent of other countries may suggest to us of alleviating any useless suffering to which the guilty among us may be subjected,—we are permitted to look abroad upon a land, through the whole extent of which, from the pure original fountains of the law, Mercy and Justice flow together.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

France.

WE have lately seen the numbers of two religious periodical works which have been commenced at Paris, during the last year, and which have been received for the Reading-Room of Harvard University, through the politeness of our countryman S. V. Wilder, Esq. now resident in that city.

The one is a protestant work, entitled *Archives du Christianisme* (Records of Christianity), commenced in January 1818, and published monthly in numbers containing each 36 pages, 12mo. price 6 francs a year.

The other is a Catholic work, entitled *Chronique Religieuse* (Religious Chronicle), begun in June, published in numbers, which appear irregularly, but on an average about once a week, containing each 24 pages, 12mo. 26 numbers make a volume, the price of which is 9 francs.

Both these journals are respectably conducted, and contain a considerable proportion of interesting matter. In each we

find complaints of the great want of pastors in France both Protestant and Catholic. In the *Chronique Religieuse*, there are various articles relating to the divisions by which the Roman Catholic church in that country is at present disturbed; one party maintaining high notions of the power of the Pope, and the other defending the liberties of the Gallican church; one treating with great harshness those priests, who, during the time of the revolution, took the *constitutional oath*, and the other defending their cause; one endeavouring to restore the Romish religion as it formerly existed, and the other discovering a more liberal and enlightened spirit. It is to the latter party, that the conductors of the *Chronique* decidedly belong; though at the same time, they appear to be sincere and zealous Catholics.

On the whole, what we have seen in these journals, as well as what we know from other sources, affords encouragement to hope for a better state of religion in France than has previously existed in that country. Toleration is now established. There appears to be little or no restraint from public authority upon freedom of discussion. Writings, such as the journals before us, show that neither true religious sentiments nor a belief in Christianity are extinct; and those who appear as defenders of our religion, both Catholics and Protestants, seem to have just notions of what is essential to its character.

We will give a few extracts from those passages which seemed to us most likely to interest our readers.

In the *Chronique Religieuse* for August 10th, 1818, we find the following notice of *Peace Societies*.

“During some years past, *Peace Societies* have been forming in England, and still more in the United States of America; and particularly in Massachusetts. Their object, which is in a high degree laudable, is to prevent and put an end to war. To promote this object they have published various writings, which are read with great interest.”

After some remarks upon the sentiments of Erasmus, of the Friends, and others, it is observed;

“The writings of which we have before spoken consider the subject under every aspect, and seem to have exhausted it. It cannot be doubted that they furnish a refutation of the arguments of Lord Kaims in favor of war.”

Then, after a short account of some of the topics treated of in the publications mentioned, it is added;

“Many collateral questions are discussed in these writings, which give proof of the talents and benevolence of their authors. Every one must praise their motives, whether he adopts their opinions or not. All men of mild and correct feelings will wish with them to banish forever the scourge of war. Unfortunately our hopes are not so strong as our wishes.”

We feel assured that the author of the above notice had seen the writings of our countryman Dr. Worcester, who deserves so much honour for his exertions in the cause of humanity ; and to whom, more than to any other man, is to be attributed the diffusion of correct opinions and feelings on the subject of war. He is securing for himself a place among the great benefactors of mankind.

In the number for August 30, there is an eloquent and able article of considerable length in defence of the Lancastrian schools ; or as they are called, *Schools of mutual instruction*. *Les ecoles d'enseignement mutuel*. They have been attacked, it seems, under religious and political pretences, upon the ground that giving instruction to the poor may tend to withdraw them from the true faith, and to render them bad subjects. They have notwithstanding multiplied rapidly. "The oldest," it is said, "have not been more than three years in existence, and we already reckon nearly eight hundred."

Our readers, we think, will be interested in the following extracts from the article just mentioned. They may serve to show the spirit of liberal and intelligent Catholics at the present day in France.

Without instruction the poor cannot read the Bible—"And by what right will any one pretend to deny to a whole class of Christians, the reading of the Sacred Books, dictated by him who is Truth itself? And the reading of works composed to explain their meaning, and to inculcate sentiments of piety and love to God? Is it not manifest impiety to intercept the light and the consolations, which he sends? And who are deprived of these benefits? The most unfortunate. They, who, disinherited of almost all the pleasures of this life, have the most need, that they may not believe Providence unjust, to think upon another life, when we shall all be weighed in the same balance."

"In order to estimate the effects of instruction, it is necessary at the same time to consider those of ignorance.

"In many states of the South of Europe, the prejudice that it is necessary to keep the people in ignorance is sufficiently general among men in power. It cannot be denied that in these countries, the exterior forms of religion are punctually observed ; nor can it be denied that as much as this was done by the Pharisees at Jerusalem. Let us not fear to avow, that if one should seek in Europe for models of the ecclesiastic virtues, he would find them indeed in these countries, but that these are not the places where he would find them in the greatest abundance. Among the common people, the idea of the Di-

vinity is almost lost in a mass of gross superstitions. The observance of religious ceremonies is often considered as affording a dispensation from performing good actions, and a privilege to commit bad. Robbers stop you on the high way, wearing rosaries. A man assassinates his enemy without any remorse of conscience. A pilgrimage or a procession will wash away the crime to-morrow. The most shameful sloth nourishes the development of every vice. Conjugal fidelity, loses respect; and there are those, who, under the shelter of a scapulary, give themselves up to the worst excesses of debauchery. If the primitive christians, whose worship was so pure, could revisit such a country, what would they think?—The spirit of Christianity includes every virtue and proscribes every vice. He is not a Christian, who is not a man of virtue."

In the Archives of Christianity for November 1818 and January 1819, we find an account of the formation of a Protestant Bible Society at Paris.

Permission according to law was requested from the government, and granted in the most gracious manner. The President is the Marquis de Jaucourt, a peer of France, and member of the Consistory of the Reformed Communion. One of the Vice Presidents, is Cuvier, the celebrated naturalist, who is designated, as being one of the Lutheran church, and another the Count de Boissy d' Anglas.*

Sunday schools, it is stated in the same work, are forming in different parts of France.

A stereotype edition of Ostervald's translation of the New Testament is publishing at Paris.

Paley's Moral Philosophy has just appeared in a French translation, and is commended in both the journals.

England.

The Herald of Peace.—A monthly magazine under this title was commenced in January last, in London. We have seen the two first numbers, which are quite respectable and interesting. The object of the work is stated to be, "to foster

* Respecting the Bible Society, above mentioned, we have been favoured with the following information.

"The Bible Society at Paris has been established by the active exertions of Mr. Leo, a German Christian and Philanthropist, assisted by the influence of a gentleman from Boston (Mr. S. V. Wilder) resident in Paris, who, on a late visit to his native land, procured considerable aid at New-York from the funds of the American Bible Society, and also in Boston, from the Massachusetts Bible Society. Mr. Leo has not confined his attention to France, but was at the last dates, engaged in publishing an edition of the New Testament in Italy—where we may probably soon hear of the establishment of a Bible Society."

the spirit of inquiry which has been raised by affording authentic information of the transactions of the various Peace Societies ;" "and to form a medium of correspondence between the friends of peace in various parts of this and other countries." Agreeably to this plan, a large part of the work is occupied with articles of Intelligence, relating to the progress of pacific principles ; and among these, the exertions and publications of the Massachusetts Peace Society hold the most conspicuous place. The Constitution and annual reports of this society are introduced, together with copious extracts from the pamphlets of the Rev. N. Worcester. Some of these have been republished in England for distribution, as also the Letters addressed to Gov. Strong on the subject of war, written and published in New-York, by the Rev. Dr. Whelpley.

The information contained in the Herald, of the exertions which are making, and the progress which has been effected in this excellent cause, is highly encouraging. The societies in England are well supported, and very active. Tracts to the number of 207,000 have been printed and circulated by the London Society since its foundation in 1816, besides many thousands circulated by other societies in Great Britain.

The Herald contains the addresses presented by the London Society to the Prince Regent, to the Emperor Alexander, who has returned an answer signed by his own hand, and to the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle. From this last paper the the following is an extract.

"Your Majesties have felt the evils of war, and have deplored its calamities. You have seen its temporary successes to be without profit and without honour. You have therefore wisely determined to oppose a barrier to its future encroachments and devastations.—And how is this barrier to be formed ?

"Will your Majesties condescend to take an example from the administration of justice in small communities ? As the maxims of jurisprudence decide between man and man, so may not the laws of a sound and Christian policy determine between contending kingdoms before the high general Tribunal of Arbiters, whom your Majesties may select for that dignified and especial office ?

"And as the estates of a kingdom are assembled from time to time, to hear complaints, and to redress wrongs, so your Majesties, by assembling in person, or by distinguished representatives, will stand as Umpires, to whom will be referred all disputes in the great Christian commonwealth ; and thus a perpetual Congress will be established to arbitrate between

contending States, and to promote the happiness of the world. For, indeed, your Majesties have been pleased to consider your own and other Christian States as only forming one great Christian Nation; to acknowledge yourselves as delegated by Providence to govern the several great branches as fathers of this one family; and to confess that in reality, there is no other Sovereign than HIM, to whom alone belongs all power, because in Him alone, are found all the treasures of love, science, and infinite wisdom."

The address of this Society to the Emperor Alexander, was presented to him by Mr. Clarkson, at Aix-la-Chapelle. Upon this gentleman's return to England, in a speech before the Woodbridge Bible Association, he gave an account of his interview with the Emperor; the latter part of which is too interesting to be omitted.

The Emperor said, "it had given him peculiar satisfaction, when he had heard of a Society, established in the United States of America, *for the Prevention of War*. This had coincided so much with his (the Emperor's) own views, and was for so great a moral purpose, that he had thought it right to signify his opinion of it to its president with his own hand. Equally happy was he now to learn, that a Society had been established in London for a similar purpose, or *for the Promotion of Permanent and Universal Peace*. These societies were so many proofs to him of the moral improvement of the times, and of the spread of Gospel principles upon earth. He was of opinion, that the peaceable times prophesied of in the Holy Scriptures were hastening on, and that they would most assuredly come to pass. At this moment, the great struggle upon the earth between the Empire of Virtue and the Empire of Vice had been *visibly begun*. It was carrying on with vigour. The struggle would be great, and perhaps long. Vice had hitherto had a powerful dominion among men; but when he considered the progress which Christianity had made, of late years, by the institution of many estimable Societies, and the reinforcement she would receive from others, which would necessarily rise up in time, he had no doubt in his own mind, that she would triumph. 'Teach,' said his Majesty, 'the rising generation to read, and give them the Holy Scriptures, the only foundation of true morals, and you lay the axe at the root of every vicious custom. War itself, among others, must give way, wherever Christianity maintains a solid seat in the heart of man.'"

The Indo-Chinese Gleaner.—This is a quarterly publication, issued at Malacca, devoted to intelligence from China

and the neighbouring countries, and to accounts of the progress of Christian missions in India. We have just seen the fourth number, for May 1818. It is far less interesting than might have been expected; but the following extracts may not be unacceptable.

"The death warrants to be signed by his Majesty (the Emperor of China) at the autumnal execution, amount this year to nine hundred and thirty five. The share which Canton has in these is 133: but to the whole number executed in Canton during the year the word THOUSANDS, it is said, must be applied; some say *three thousand*. If the truth be equal to one thousand, it is a shockingly awful number of human beings for one province to sacrifice to the laws in the space of one year. I omit the word justice, for human laws and justice are not always the same."

We meet with the following remarkable Decree of the Emperor, dated June 20, 1817. "At the capital, the season of rain having passed, without any genial showers having fallen, the board of punishment is hereby ordered, to examine into the cases of all the criminals sentenced to the several species of transportation and lesser punishments, and *report to me distinctly what cases may be mitigated*, in the hope that nature will thereby be moved to confer the blessing of rain and preserve the harmony of the seasons. Respect this."

In the Emperor's decree, (it is remarked) "an over-ruling Providence is acknowledged, and that mercy is an attribute of Providence. Of the Being in whom that supreme control resides, their ideas are extremely obscure. When any Chinese is asked, who is to be moved by this act of clemency?—he replies, Teen Te, Heaven and Earth."

We make a few extracts also from a letter of Rev. W. Reeve, dated Bellary, Jan. 23, 1818.

"A wide and extensive field of successful labour has been opened from time to time, among the soldiers of the different European corps, that have been staying here.

"There has been for several years an English free school established in the Fort, which has already proved a great blessing, in not only providing food and raiment for some poor helpless orphans, but also in imparting to many children, English and country-born, a tolerable education; who, if they had not been brought under the fostering auspices of this friendly institution, might have been left to wretchedness and ruin. We are not without hopes, also, that the boarding school in the Mission house, may furnish useful members for society, and bright ornaments for the church of Christ.

"But what shall we say as to the poor Heathen, the more immediate objects of our labour? This may be said, much precious seed has been sown, followed with many prayers, and watered with many tears; but the harvest is not yet ripe;—fruits of A GOOD KIND do not yet appear. We are, however, not without encouragements, and great ones too. The prejudices of the heathen against the gospel become every day more and more insignificant and contemptible. The people manifest an inquiring disposition, ask many questions, come from far to receive our books, and listen apparently with a gratified attention, to all that they hear about THIS NEW WAY. We want MORE FAITH, MORE ZEAL, MORE SYMPATHY.

"We have now eight native schools, in which there are about three hundred and forty children. These children have committed catechisms, and large portions of scripture to memory, which they have from time to time repeated to us with great correctness."

The Psalter has been printed in Chinese, in the same size with the morning and evening prayers of the English church.

The third number of the Chinese Dictionary is completed and printed.

ORDINATIONS.

On Wednesday, April 14, Mr. JOHN PIERPONT was ordained pastor of the Church and Society in Hollis Street, Boston, as successor to the Rev. Mr. Holley. The introductory prayer was offered by the Rev. Mr. Tuckerman of Chelsea. The Sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Ware of the University, from I. Corinthians v. 18. *And all things are of God; who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.* The ordaining prayer was offered by Rev. President Kirkland; the Charge was given by Rev. Dr. Porter of Roxbury; the Right hand of Fellowship by Rev. Mr. Palfrey; and the concluding prayer by Rev. Mr. Greenwood.

April 28. Mr. CHARLES BRIGGS was ordained minister of the church in Lexington. The services were introduced with prayer by the Rev. Mr. Briggs of Mansfield. The Sermon by Rev. Dr. Richmond of Dorchester, from Ephesians vi. 15. *Having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.* The Ordaining prayer by Rev. President Kirkland. The Charge by Rev. Dr. Stearns of Lincoln. The Right hand of Fellowship by Rev. Mr. Field of Weston. The concluding prayer by Rev. Mr. Fiske of West Cambridge.

OBITUARY.

Died at Savannah, March 7th, 1819, Mr. FRANCIS WILLIAM WINTHROP, aged 19, son of Thomas L. Winthrop, Esq. of Boston.

There are few of the dispensations of God's Providence, which are so well adapted forcibly to impress some of the most important religious truths, as the death of the young; and few which are calculated so effectually to rouse us to exertion, and to call forth all our powers in the cause of virtue, as the loss of those in whom were united high intellectual endowments, and distinguished moral excellence. When we are called to mourn the death of those, who are taken from us early in life if their life be measured by their years, but who have advanced with rapid step in the path of improvement, we feel with double force the admonition to exert every faculty, and to improve every moment allowed us; for the number of labourers is lessened, and more is dependent upon our efforts,—a more weighty responsibility rests upon our employment of that time, which, we are reminded, may be short to the youngest.

Such an admonition has been given to his friends by the death of Mr. Francis W. Winthrop, a young man of whom the highest hopes had been raised, and of whose eminence and usefulness the highest expectations were not extravagant. In his death society has experienced a loss, which, though it can hardly be fully appreciated, is not the less real and severe. Blessed with great natural powers, he had cultivated them with success, and gave evidence as well of the extent of his acquirements, as of the original force of his understanding, in the rank he sustained as a scholar at the University, in the few but excellent productions of his pen, and in familiar conversations with his friends. Though his talents were remarkable, they were not more conspicuous, than the unaffected modesty which enhanced their value, while it in some degree veiled their brilliancy. Less ambitious of praise, than of being praiseworthy, he was satisfied with the approbation of the few, and uncorrupted by the vain desire of dazzling the many. He maintained his opinions with a manly firmness, but was equally removed from presumptuous boldness, and yielding timidity. Possessing feelings of great delicacy, though without approaching a morbid sensibility, his regard to those of others was as uniform, as it was kind and attractive. Though his life was short, he lived long enough to sustain and resist some of the strongest temptations to which human virtue is exposed. Amidst the powerful seductions of vice, and the numerous facilities to error by which a young man's strength of principle is tried in a collegiate life, his integrity was not merely uncorrupted but confirmed; his purity was not only unsullied, but became constantly brighter. When he was suffering under the pains of disease and the rapid failure of his bodily strength, his patience and unrepining resignation were such as could have arisen from no other principle than an ardent piety, and firm reliance on the goodness of God. By such qualities it was that he acquired and preserved the esteem and respect of all who knew him, and the most devoted attachment of his particular associates. By the strong powers of his understanding, and the delicacy and purity of his mind, by his deference to others mingled with a just confidence in himself, by his high standard of moral excellence, and the warmth of his piety, he was in a peculiar manner fitted for the profession of Divinity, which he had adopted with deliberation, and would have pursued with ardour, had his life been prolonged. But while the hopes of his friends and the expectations of society are thus mournfully disappointed, our grief for his loss is mingled with gratitude for his life and example, and softened by our confident assurance, that he is raised to a higher sphere of action and of usefulness; that he will still enjoy the merciful protection, and the approving smile of his God and Father.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

The Young Preacher's Manual; or a Collection of Treatises on preaching—comprising Brown's Address to Students in Divinity, Fenelon's Dialogues on the Eloquence of the pulpit, Claude's Essay on the composition of a sermon, abridged, Gregory on the composition and delivery of a sermon, Keybaz on the art of preaching—with a list of books. Revised by Ebenezer Porter, D.D. Bartlet Professor, Andover. Boston, Charles F. Wer.

Nine Sermons preached at Plattsburgh, N. Y. By the Rev. William R. Weeks, A. M. 2d edition.

The Trial. Calvin and Hopkins *versus* the Bible and common sense. By a Lover of truth. 2d edition, enlarged. To which are added some remarks on the Andover Institution.

A Series of Letters on the mode and subjects of Baptism, addressed to the Christian Public: to which is prefixed a brief account of the commencement and progress of the author's trial on those points, which terminated in his embracing believers' baptism. By Stephen Chapin, late pastor of the congregational Church in Mount Vernon, N. H. Boston, Lincoln & Edmands.

A Statement of the proceedings in the First Church and parish in Dedham respecting the settlement of a minister; 1818. With some considerations on congregational Church polity. By a member of said Church and Parish.

A Course of Lectures, containing a description and systematic arrangement of the several branches of Divinity; accompanied with an account both of the principal authors, and of the progress which has been made at different periods in Theological Learning. By Herbert Marsh, D.D. F.R.S. Margaret Professor of Divinity.—Part IV. On the Interpretation of Prophecy. Boston. Cummings & Hilliard.

A Humble attempt to reconcile the differences of Christians respecting the extent of the Atonement. By Edward D. Griffin, D. D. New-York.

A Sermon on Robbery, Piracy, and Murder; in which Duelling and Suicide are particularly considered. Preached after the execution of the four pirates. By T. Baldwin, D. D.

An Appeal to the public with respect to the unlawfulness of Divorces, pleaded before the Consociation of New Haven, Dec. 5, 1785. By Benjamin Trumbull, D. D. 2d edition.

The History of the Jews from the Destruction of Jerusalem to the present time, by Hannah Adams, of Boston, America, has been reprinted at London in a handsome octavo volume.

☞ We acknowledge an interesting communication from *A friend to peace in church and state*, which shall receive attention.

Osmyn has also been received.

☞ A gentleman, whose name is left with our publishers, Messrs. WELLS & LILLY, is very desirous of obtaining the loan of a volume of the *Critical Review*, published, he thinks, between the years 1804 and 1810, containing, among the Foreign Articles, a review of *Paulus' Commentary on the New-Testament*.